



**The New Zealand Carers' Strategy Action Plan**  
for 2014 to 2018

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## Foreword

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Over 400,000 or almost one in ten New Zealanders are carers. A carer provides care for someone close to them who needs help with everyday living because of a health condition or disability. Carers come from all walks of life and vary in age, ethnicity, culture and outlook. However, the word “carer” does not adequately reflect the diversity of those who take up the role, the special relationship they have with those they care for, and the sometimes tough circumstances in which they live.

Our population is ageing. We are living longer. We want people to be involved in their communities and families. Therefore the need for whānau, aiga and family carers will continue to grow. Now more than ever we need to acknowledge and support this diverse, skilled and generous group we call “carers”.

The New Zealand Carers’ Strategy is driven by the vision of improving support for family, whānau and aiga carers in their role of caring for someone with a health condition or disability. The New Zealand Carers’ Strategy Action Plan for 2014 to 2018 is our way of making this real. The Government has drawn on the knowledge and experience of the New Zealand Carers Alliance, international research and valuable public consultation to build on the results and lessons of the Action Plan for 2008 to 2012. With this Action Plan, we are responding to the concerns of our carers –

including their need for a break, protecting their general health and well-being, keeping them informed, improving their pathways to employment and increasing public awareness of the valuable role they play in our communities.

I want to thank all those who made a contribution to this Action Plan – including the New Zealand Carers Alliance, government agencies and all those who participated in public consultation. This Action Plan is the culmination of all your hard work, and another step toward achieving the vision of the New Zealand Carers’ Strategy.

As whānau, aiga, family and friends are called upon more and more to assume a caring role this Action Plan will touch the lives of more and more New Zealanders. I hope that this Action Plan will make the role of carers a little easier.



**Hon. Jo Goodhew**  
Minister for Senior Citizens



# Introduction

# Introduction

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“Family carers are a large population of New Zealanders. Nearly half a million New Zealanders support at least that many people themselves...It is a number that will only grow as the population ages: everyone in New Zealand is likely to be touched in some way by the caring role in their lifetime.”

*Carers Alliance submission, August 2013*

A carer provides care for someone close to them (family or friend) who needs help with everyday living because of a health condition or disability. In many contexts, whānau, aiga and family adopt a collective caring role. Carers’ effort, understanding and compassion support people to live with dignity and participate more fully in society.

Caring for people with health conditions, a disability, a mental health condition, or an addiction is an important contribution to New Zealand’s society. Family, whānau, aiga or friends undertake much of the care. They help reduce the dependence on long-term paid care systems, such as residential care, and enable those living with health issues or disability to participate more fully in their whānau, aiga and communities.

Carers come from all walks of life and vary in age, ethnicity, culture, and outlook. In New Zealand, a carer is most likely to be a family member, a woman of working age, and caring for an older person. Many carers of older people are themselves older adults. A Māori woman is more likely to be a carer than a woman in any other population group. Young people may also be carers for sick, disabled, or infirm siblings, parents or other relatives. Grandparents and great-grandparents may be the primary carers for their disabled or ill grandchildren and great grandchildren. Parent carers of disabled children are also a substantial group.

The ageing population is resulting in more older people needing support. The number of people over the age of 65 is projected to double in the next 20 years to around 1.2 million in 2036. Among the over 65 population, the median age is also increasing because of declining mortality and increasing lifespan. By 2051, the number of older people with a disability is expected to grow by 60 per cent. Medical advances and population ageing are creating a demand for initiatives where older people are supported to live in their own homes and use home-based support services. Whānau, aiga, family

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and friends will be called upon more to provide care and support.

A substantial commitment to caring can have a marked impact on the whānau and the life of the carer, such as poorer mental and physical health, loss of social connections, negative impacts on financial circumstances and paid employment, and concerns about the future of the person who needs care.

The purpose of this document is to set out the strategic framework (vision and guiding principles) for the New Zealand Carers' Strategy, and to show how the Government will work towards achieving the vision of the Strategy with the Action Plan for 2014 to 2018.





## The New Zealand Carers' Strategy

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The Carers' Strategy was developed through a partnership between government agencies and the New Zealand Carers Alliance (a coalition of over 40 national not-for-profit organisations). Its purpose is to improve support for family, whānau, aiga and carers. The Carers' Strategy was launched in 2008 with an Action Plan covering 2008 to 2012.

The Carers' Strategy has a strategic framework with a vision and guiding principles which are carried forward into the five-year action plans. The action plans contain objectives with actions that the Government will undertake to address areas of key priority identified by carers and the Government.



# Vision

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The key to the New Zealand Carers' Strategy is its vision for New Zealand carers. This vision has come from talking to carers and the people they deal with. It is the ultimate goal the Strategy will work towards achieving.

## **The government's vision for carers in New Zealand is that:**

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New Zealand Aotearoa is a society that values individuals, families, whānau or aiga who support others who need help with their everyday living.

## **This will be achieved when:**

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- carers have choices and opportunities to participate in family life, social activities, employment and education
- carers' voices are heard in decision-making that affects them.

Caring should be something people do with pride and feel supported when they do it.

By valuing and supporting New Zealand carers, we help to develop strong healthy families that are able to help their members reach their full potential as participating members of society.

By improving choices for carers in paid employment and education, we help to address skill shortages within the economy, to improve productivity levels and to help carers to secure their present and future income and resources.

"[The Carers' Strategy needs to] commit to making a difference, supporting carers to succeed in their important role as New Zealand's largest health and social services workforce. This includes considering the impact of their role on carers' lives, the lives of those they support if carers' wellbeing is compromised, and their participation in paid work and the wider economy."

*Carers Alliance submission, August 2013*

# Guiding principles

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The Carers' Strategy has four guiding principles to help achieve its vision for New Zealand carers.

These principles will be used by government agencies to ensure the perspectives and needs of carers, their families and those close to them are considered and catered for in any activities and decision-making that affects carers. NGOs, businesses and community groups can use these principles as well, in their work with carers and those close to them.

## The Strategy's four guiding principles are:

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- recognise diversity
- be proactive
- enable carers
- be inclusive.



“The population of carers and those they support is extremely diverse, spanning every family and whānau, workplace, age, income, culture, and health or disability type imaginable. Their needs are unique...and one size does not fit all.”

*Carers Alliance submission, August 2013*

“Carers often know what they don’t want to happen, but don’t know what other alternatives or options are available.”

*Submission by a carer, September 2007*

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## Recognise diversity

Carers exist throughout New Zealand society and vary in age, ethnicity, culture, characteristics, outlooks and needs. Actions taken under the Carers’ Strategy need to recognise and acknowledge the diversity of carers’ needs and aspirations to be effective. Actions need to:

- value and respect carers, the people they support and their families in terms of their cultural identity
- consider the needs of specific groups, eg young carers and Māori and Pacific carers
- acknowledge the changing and differing needs of people at different ages and at different life stages, including the key points where life changes are occurring
- be conveyed in a way that recognises carers’ differing needs for, and ability to access, information
- be flexible and not overly rule-driven, meaning they are able to respond to individual circumstances for carers and those close to them.

## Be proactive

Carers need to know support is available for them when they need it. Support mechanisms need to be:

- responsive, eg information is available when carers need it and support services are put in place quickly
- easily accessible
- available to carers so they can plan ahead and prepare, rather than live from day to day.

“Autonomy... goes beyond the principle of empowerment. Autonomy allows each individual to choose their own most positive supports. Having chosen these supports, individuals gain strength from connecting and participating in wider groupings of family/whānau and communities on the basis of independence.”

*Submission by the Mental Health Commission, September 2007*

“The whole whānau needs to be acknowledged – they are not separate [from] carers.”

*Consultation Hui, July 2013*

## Enable carers

Carers need to have choices and the freedom to develop and maintain their personal, family, whānau or aiga and community support systems. Any action taken as part of the Carers’ Strategy needs to reinforce the carer’s ability to tap into these support systems. Formal support systems need to be reliable and to provide real support to carers.

## Be inclusive

It is important to acknowledge that the needs of carers, family, whānau or aiga and the person being supported are often intertwined and, for some, the formal support system is a key part of their lives.

It is also important to recognise that both the carer and the person they support have rights as well as needs and, at times, these may not be the same. The impact of policies and decision-making on the entire family, whānau or aiga unit needs to be considered as well as the impact on the person being supported.



**Action Plan for 2014 to 2018**

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During June/July 2013, the Ministry of Social Development consulted carers on a draft Carers' Strategy Action Plan for 2013 to 2018. The draft took into account the priorities of the Carers Alliance, a stocktake of progress on the Action Plan for 2008 to 2012, international trends, and Government priorities.

We sought carers' feedback on:

- a proposed new objective: "Increase public awareness and understanding of the carer's role"
- an amended objective: "Provide training and pathways to paid employment for carers, and support carers to achieve work/life balance" (originally worded "Provide training and pathways to employment for carers")
- new actions for all of the objectives.

## Summary of feedback

The consultation feedback reflected a very high level of support for each of the proposals. Analysis of accompanying comments for some proposals, however, indicated a strong need to add some actions, amend others, re-order objectives and some actions according to priority, and to refine some of the commentary in the Plan.

The Action Plan has been amended to reflect that:

- the top priority for carers is being able to take a break when required
- respite options need to be flexible, whānau-, aiga- and carer-friendly, and available to all carers
- whānau, aiga and carers need good information about what respite options are available to them

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- carer learning and well-being is a high priority, and learning needs to be developed with whānau, aiga and carer input, culturally appropriate and offered face to face as well as online and in print
  - information available online is important but to be inclusive, multiple approaches to providing promotional resources and information for carers are required.

### **ORDER OF OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS**

The order of the objectives has been rearranged to reflect the priorities of carers as follows:

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Enable whānau, aiga, family and carers to take a break

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Protect the health and wellbeing of whānau, aiga, family and carers

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Provide information whānau, aiga, family and carers need

**OBJECTIVE 4:** Improve pathways to paid employment for carers and support for whānau, aiga, family and carers to balance their work, life and caring roles

**OBJECTIVE 5:** Increase awareness and understanding of the carer's role.

All the objectives are important for carers, but the consultation made it clear that the top priorities are practical support for taking a break and carers' health and wellbeing. Increased awareness of the carer's role was considered important, but many respondents considered that promotional activity (under the original proposed Objective One: Increase public awareness of the carer's role) should not take precedence over or detract from the other objectives.

Some actions within the objectives have also been re-ordered to improve the logical presentation of the actions within each objective.

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## Terminology

In response to feedback from the Māori, Pacific and Asian focus group meetings, the use of collective terminology (such as family, whānau, aiga and carers) is included, as already reflected in the Carers' Strategy.

"Informal" carers has been removed as many carers considered this terminology inappropriate. For the same reason, "carer learning" is used consistently rather than "carer training". The terms "hidden" carers and "invisible" carers have also been removed, as some carers considered that these could be interpreted as blaming descriptions.



# Objective one:

## Enable whānau, aiga, family and carers to take a break

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The actions under this objective aim to provide families, whānau, aiga and carers with more choice and flexibility for taking breaks.

### **ACTION 1.1**

#### **Develop a range of respite options.**

##### **This includes:**

- **trialling of different types of respite options for families that give greater choice, control and flexibility over the services they receive**
- **exploring the development of an online carer matching service.**

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Trends in New Zealand and overseas indicate an increasing focus, by governments and carers, on more flexible options for carers to take a break, including in home, out of home, with or without family, aiga or whānau, and not only facility-based options.

In New Zealand, the Ministry of Health wants to give disabled people and their families and carers more flexible respite services to better meet their needs. It is evident that a range of respite options

is needed, and the Ministry is moving towards enabling whānau, aiga, families and disabled people to access respite care at a time and in a way that suits their personal needs, giving families greater choice, control and flexibility over the services they receive.

The online carer matching service will increase the range of respite options for the family carer. The proposed online service will:

- hold a database of key carer criteria that the family carer may search to select the most suitable alternative carer or option available to support the person they care for when the family carer needs a break
- provide the most up to date information about alternative carers through the proposed “real time” use of technology
- provide carers with a more efficient system and more choice in how and when they may take a break.

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## **ACTION 1.2**

### **Develop a carers resource on respite.**

Lead agency: Ministry of Social Development with input from Ministry of Health and the Accident Compensation Corporation

The resource will provide information about respite options and funding provided by government and help carers and their families, aiga and whānau to develop workable respite strategies. It will also include information about whānau, aiga, community, volunteer, and affordable accessible holiday accommodation and emergency planning tools to help carers plan. This can be widely shared and promoted at CarersAir, Carers Alliance and other non-government organisation websites; through Māori, Pacific and Asian groups; health, community and rural networks; and in Carers NZ infopacks to reach as many carers, aiga and whānau as possible. It may also be promoted at the proposed online matching site.



# Objective two:

## Protect the health and wellbeing of whānau, aiga, family and carers

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The actions under this objective focus on supporting whānau, aiga and carers to acquire the capability to undertake their caring role confidently and to keep themselves fit, well and safe.

### **ACTION 2.1**

**Develop and deliver learning and wellbeing resources designed by the Ministry of Health to meet the current needs of disability sector carers, families, aiga and whānau.**

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Following a review of Ministry of Health funded programmes for carer learning, a set of practical learning and wellbeing resources and guidelines will be developed, containing current, user-friendly carer information on specific topics. The resources will take a number of forms including online downloadable documents and interactive demonstration videos. They will also be available in booklets to carers through learning and wellbeing programmes.

### **ACTION 2.2**

**Adapt *Guidelines for Moving and Handling People in Home Care*, for integration into the resources and information for family carers in Action 2.1.**

Lead agency: Accident Compensation Corporation

The *Guidelines for Moving and Handling People in Home Care* were developed to strengthen quality assurance for Accident Compensation Corporation clients who have paid carers. Information from the Guidelines will be customised with a focus on injury prevention for family carers, so it can be incorporated into the learning and wellbeing resources for disability sector carers, families, aiga and whānau (Action 2.1 being led by the Ministry of Health).

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### **ACTION 2.3**

**Bring together learning and best practice resources and information for carers from across government and non-government agencies and make these accessible in user-friendly ways.**

Lead co-ordinating agency: Ministry of Social Development, with Ministry of Health and Accident Compensation Corporation contributing

This action involves the Ministry of Health, the Accident Compensation Corporation and the Ministry of Social Development working together to identify and collate best practice learning resources for supporting whānau, aiga and carers' health and wellbeing. There are opportunities to present these resources in more user-friendly ways such as online interactive access, using YouTube and other social media, and CarersAir. Ways to reach those carers who prefer learning together as a whānau, aiga, or in local community and cultural support groups, including rural networks, will also be used.



# Objective three:

## Provide information whānau, aiga, family and carers need

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The focus of this objective is on supporting carers' information needs and enabling connections to build the capacity of carers, families, aiga and whānau. It supports work under the other objectives for which information, advice and support need to be accessible, relevant, timely, of a high quality, and in a range of languages to ensure carers from diverse backgrounds can use the information.

### **ACTION 3.1**

#### **Build on the development of an online information centre for carers (CarersAir).**

Lead agency: Ministry of Social Development

Online development fits with the Government's priority for New Zealanders to have digital access to information and services. We will build on the Carers NZ website, CarersAir, which already operates as a national information centre for carers.

Resources under other proposed actions will be made accessible through CarersAir, which has the potential to operate as:

- **an information and learning centre:** containing specialist knowledge and learning resources from the Carers Alliance and other sources, and promotional and current awareness material on issues of interest to carers
- **a gateway:** leading to other sources of relevant information
- **a hub:** enabling carers (and those who support them) to network and share their information, knowledge and resources, including services such as a respite locator and a carer matching service
- **a clearing house:** using the database of carers and organisations for outreach purposes, to distribute information and for surveying and consulting
- **a monitor and data-collector:** enabling the gathering of profile information from groups of carers on their characteristics, aspirations, needs, experiences and ideas, and feeding this information – with the necessary permissions in place – to the Government and other providers for policy and service development.

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Other enhancements include interactive learning resources and enabling carers visiting the online centre to select resources and store them in a personal login area for regular review. Importantly, CarersAir will allow carers, families, aiga and whānau to communicate with others who share similar aspirations, challenges and experiences. This will include support for Young Carers NZ to develop a Facebook page.

### **ACTION 3.2**

**Provide information for whānau, aiga and carers at the places where carers visit, such as general practitioner (GP) surgeries, hospital clinics, chemists, marae hui, community venues, support networks as well as online.**

Lead agency: Ministry of Social Development

Carers are a diverse group and access information in a variety of ways and places, and from a variety of sources. Some carers prefer to access advice and information online, others via 0800, some by email, others through receiving printed resources by post or at hui and meetings. Action 3.2 will include connecting with the networks of young

carers, parents of disabled children, older carers, rural carers and Māori, Pacific, Asian and other cultural groups (eg New Settlers) to improve access to government information for all carers.

### **ACTION 3.3**

**Revise *A Guide for Carers*.**

Lead agency: Ministry of Social Development

*A Guide for Carers* will continue to be available in print in recognition that not all carers have access to online information. The revised Guide will include improved information on respite options for whānau, aiga and carers, and support available for young carers, older carers, rural carers, and carers who care for people with mental health conditions or addictions and drug issues. Translations of the flyer for the Guide will continue to be updated to ensure that online information is available in a range of languages.

# Objective four:

## Improve pathways to paid employment for carers and support for whānau, aiga, family and carers to balance their work, life and caring roles

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Many carers report that they have had to give up their careers and well-paid jobs to undertake their caring role. While managing paid employment with caring responsibilities can be difficult, remaining in paid work can have a positive impact on carers, aiga and whānau. Paid work provides income and can help to maintain social networks, offer temporary relief from caring, and support self-development.

Employers' positive and supportive attitudes toward carers, and flexible working arrangements that help to accommodate their caregiving needs, will make a significant difference to whānau, aiga, families and carers and the people they care for. This objective strengthens the focus on promoting flexible, supportive working arrangements for carers who wish to enter, remain in, or return to paid work, and it will complement other objectives in the Action Plan that cover support for carers' life needs.

### **ACTION 4.1**

#### **Provide information on flexible working arrangements.**

**Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment**

Part 6AA (Flexible working arrangements) of the Employment Relations Act 2000 (the Act) provides that employees are entitled to make a request for flexible working arrangements after six months of service if they have responsibility for the care of any person. Proposed changes to Part 6AA include extending the provisions to all employees and allowing employees to request flexible work arrangements from the beginning of their employment. This will improve access for all employees and better support labour market participation. The Minister of Labour has introduced legislation to amend the Act to give effect to these changes on flexible working arrangements.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment will provide information and raise awareness on the extended provisions (when they come into force) and the benefits of flexible working arrangements to employees and employers.

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## **ACTION 4.2**

**Work with Carers NZ, Business NZ and the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, to provide information for employers on supporting staff with caring responsibilities.**

Lead agency: Ministry of Social Development

Under this action, information on current New Zealand and international initiatives designed to improve paid employment arrangements and work-life balance for carers, will be adapted to the New Zealand carer context. These initiatives include:

- the Ministry of Social Development's Child Youth and Family "Staying On" programme
- the Australian Care Aware Workplaces
- the Carers UK's Employers for Carers initiative.

This action will include providing information to raise employer awareness of carers that promotes easy ways to support them at work, and information that promotes "back-to-work" information and programmes for carers returning to employment when their caring role has ended.

## **ACTION 4.3**

**Provide information about ways carers can get their skills recognised so they can fast-track study and work opportunities.**

Lead agency: Ministry of Social Development supported by Carers NZ

Work is already under way with Careerforce (the industry training organisation for health, disability, aged support and social services for Levels 1–8 on the New Zealand Qualifications Authority Qualifications Framework) and others.

# Objective five:

## Increase awareness and understanding of the carer's role

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This objective aims to increase awareness and understanding of the role of carers by profiling carers and highlighting what they do.

### **ACTION 5.1**

**Develop promotional information resources about carers and their roles.**

**This will include information targeted to:**

- **professionals and others who may work or interact with carers, such as Ministry of Social Development frontline staff and GPs**
- **carers who are not currently aware of support available to them**
- **the New Zealand public.**

Lead agency: Ministry of Social Development supported by Carers NZ

This action involves developing and distributing consistent communication and promotional information about who carers are, their various roles, their contribution, and where they can go for information and support. Promotional material would target those who interact with carers, including health professionals, government agencies, service providers, and employers, so

they can offer or refer carers, aiga and whānau to appropriate support.

Many family members, aiga and whānau view their caring role as a normal part of life, do not identify themselves as “carers”, and are not aware of support available to them. This action will involve making connections with cultural and community networks so information reaches all groups of carers – including older carers, rural carers, aiga and whānau.

It will also target the general public to improve understanding and appreciation of the carer's role. It will build on and complement promotional material developed by Carers NZ for their carers information packs, Family Care magazine and CarersAir website. Rural Women New Zealand publications have a wide rural reach and could contribute in the dissemination of information about carers, their roles, support, and stories.

Providing information for Māori may require different approaches, such as effective and meaningful kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face communication) and recognition of the marae

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as a hub of learning and development. Information will be made available where whānau go, including on Māori radio and online networks.

## **ACTION 5.2**

### **Better understand the needs of younger carers, older carers, and carers of older people in need of assistance.**

Lead agency: Ministry of Social Development

Improving our understanding of the needs of different groups of carers will help us to develop responses to support them. Consultation indicated that we should initially focus on younger carers, older carers, and carers of older people in need of assistance.

Young caring can have impacts on a young person's socialisation, schooling, participation in tertiary studies, and the paid workforce. Mid-life carers of older people and older people caring for one another are the fastest growing population of carers in New Zealand. This action will add to knowledge about their unique needs, what information and learning would be most helpful to them, and how they would like to receive information (print, online, face-to-face).



# Appendices

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## Appendix 1: What we know about New Zealand carers

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According to latest available official information, about 20 per cent of carers in New Zealand are under 30 years old; about 30 per cent are between 30 and 44 years; about 40 per cent are between 45 and 64 years; and about 12 per cent are 65 years or over.

The most common source of help for those being supported is from a family, whānau or aiga member. Help with household tasks, such as heavy housework and meal preparation, is most commonly given by a spouse or partner, followed by daughters, sons and parents. After family and whānau, the next most frequent sources of help are paid individuals and voluntary organisations.

Women are more likely to be carers than men. Around 60 per cent of carers in New Zealand are women. International research shows women are also more likely to be the main carers and to provide assistance for more hours.

Māori and Pacific peoples are more likely to provide unpaid support than other ethnic groups. Generally, Māori and Pacific peoples face complex caring responsibilities, particularly in the 15–44 years age group. The younger average age of Māori and Pacific carers, their higher rates of severe disability, and their larger households make it more likely they are caring for more than one person and across more than one generation.

Many New Zealand carers identify themselves as unemployed and may be interested in paid employment if suitable jobs are available. Around 70 per cent of carers aged 25–64 years are also in paid employment. Around two-thirds of these people are employed full-time.

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## Appendix 2: Stakeholders

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Every New Zealander must take ownership of the Carers' Strategy if it is going to work effectively for carers and those close to them. The stakeholder groups that will play leading roles in making the Strategy work are:

- *Carers* – This Strategy has been developed for carers. Their lives will be directly affected by the outcomes from the Strategy so they need to take ownership of it. They need to tell us what is working, what is not, and what we can do better.
- *Families, whānau, aiga or circles of friends of carers* – These will benefit directly from the family-focused support provided by the Strategy. Families play a vital role – they have the most direct relationship with the carer and the person being supported and often help with the caring role.
- *People receiving support* – The relationship between the support a carer receives, and the support available to the person they care for, is intertwined. It is important to recognise both the carer and the person they support have rights as well as needs and at times these may not be the same. If the carer is supported properly in their role, it can remove stress from the caring relationship and they can better care for those people who need their support.
- *The community and voluntary sector, including NGOs and advocacy organisations* – These groups are often the advocates for carers. In their advocacy role they can support carers and the Government to work together to keep the Strategy alive and current. They can also use the Strategy to guide their own decision-making.
- *Funders* – Funders can ensure that funding and funding policies reflect the vision, principles and objectives of the Strategy and that workplace practices consider the needs of the person being supported, the carers and their families. These groups play a vital role in making sure

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work towards achieving the vision outlined in the Strategy can continue.

- *Employers, unions, businesses and other workplace organisations* – These groups can use the Strategy to create workplaces that recognise and consider the needs of carers and their families. This approach will ultimately benefit both employers and carers. Employers may at any time be or become carers and potentially will benefit from the Strategy in their caring role.
- *Crown Entities, eg ACC and District Health Boards* – Crown Entities can use the Strategy to guide their policy development, decision making and service delivery. They can use the Strategy to help ensure that the needs of both the person who has ill health or is disabled and those close to them are considered in service delivery and supports.
- *Government* – Government can use the Strategy to guide its policy development and decision-making. This will ensure future decisions have considered the needs of carers and will work towards achieving the Strategy's vision for carers in New Zealand. Government has a responsibility to keep listening to carers so their voices continue to be heard.
- *The wider public* – Every New Zealander can work to achieve the vision outlined in this Strategy by recognising and valuing carers in their communities and by supporting them when they need it. Many New Zealanders will become carers sometime during their lives and they may need the same support.

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## Appendix 3: Measuring the success of the Strategy

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To make sure the Carers' Strategy is doing its job successfully and moving us towards its vision for carers in New Zealand, the Government will:

- monitor the progress of the implementation of the Strategy
- readjust the Strategy's objectives to adapt to changing circumstances
- be accountable to carers and their families for delivering what the Strategy says it will deliver in the Five-year Action Plan.

A key part of keeping the Strategy vibrant and effective is a partnership of commitment to the Strategy between government and stakeholders. These stakeholders, along with government, will have a role in achieving the vision of this Strategy and include:

- carers
- families, whānau, aiga or circles of friends of carers
- people receiving support
- the community and voluntary sector, including NGOs and advocacy organisations
- funders
- employers, unions and other workplace organisations
- crown entities, eg ACC and District Health Boards
- the wider public.

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## Appendix 4: The role of monitoring, research and evaluation

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International and local research on caring combined with what carers said during the consultation period has given the Government a solid understanding of the major issues for carers and a better knowledge of what has been done elsewhere to support them. A programme of monitoring, research and evaluation will help to build this knowledge as the Strategy is implemented.

The Government will develop a monitoring framework to measure the progress of the Strategy and action plans. Monitoring, research and evaluation will be key ways of keeping carers and other stakeholders up to date with how well the Strategy is doing for New Zealand carers.

The New Zealand Carers' Strategy monitoring, research and evaluation programme will:

- provide information to help the Government develop the Strategy over time as more is learnt about the current and future needs of carers
- help the Government to understand the Strategy's progress towards achieving its vision for carers, as the Action Plan is put into place.

The New Zealand Carers' Strategy monitoring, research and evaluation programme will include:

- ongoing programme monitoring against Action Plan objectives and an annual report on progress
- using existing information and research to investigate the characteristics of carers and the nature and type of problems they face.





**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
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New Zealand Government

