

Position Statement

Unpaid Carers

Jewish Care has one clear vision: **Together, building and supporting a healthy, resilient, and inclusive Jewish community.** Our values are universal and enduring in nature, but are also particular to the Jewish approach to creating a meaningful life, and a strong, cohesive community.

Our foundational values define who we are and underpin everything we do. The values, **Respect** (*derech eretz*), **Community** (*kehilla*), **Inclusion** (*hachlala*) and **Social Responsibility** (*achrayoot chevratit*), are about people - they provide a moral compass for the way we respond to challenges and the decisions we make.

These values pervade every aspect Jewish Care, informing relationships between colleagues, staff and clients, and our organisation and the wider community.

The Board of Jewish Care seeks to demonstrate our commitment to these values by clearly stating Jewish Care's position on important issues that are contextual to the Jewish community's rich history or because it frames the way we will conduct ourselves and our engagement with members of the community.

Preface

An unpaid carer is a person who provides personal care, support and assistance to another individual in need due to age/fragility, disability, medical condition, including terminal or chronic illness or mental illnessⁱ. Carers are usually family members or close acquaintances. The role of a carer differs from paid care workers or companions who support individuals in a professional capacity.

In Australia, carers play a central role in the health, aged care and disability sectors. In 2015, 2.7 million people provided informal care to individuals who needed help because of disability or age-related dependencyⁱⁱ. Over half of carers are between 35 and 64 years of ageⁱⁱⁱ, and between 25-30% are born outside Australia, with English as their second language^{iv}.

About 272,000 of Australia's carers are young carers under the age of 25 years^v, with 59,100 under 15 years^{vi}, caring for a parent, partner, sibling, their own child, relative or friend. As a result many carers in the Jewish community are young people caring for parents with mental illness; siblings taking on caring roles; grandparents caring for their grandchildren with disability. These carers are often referred to as hidden carers.

דרך ארץ
derech eretz
respect

קהילה
kehilla
community

הכללה
hachlala
inclusion

אחריות חברתית
achrayoot chevratit
social responsibility

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The Productivity Commission Inquiry into Caring for Older Australians 2010 revealed that family members and other informal carers provide the majority of care for older people^{vii}. However, the Commission also reported that the relative availability of informal carers will decline into the future, thus reducing the ability of some older people to receive home based care. Contributing factors to reduced carer availability include increasing financial stress, stress on employment participation, and family discord.

Position Statement

Jewish Care recognises and respects the importance of carers in supporting and providing assistance to people and for providing a valuable social and economic contribution to the Jewish community. In this unpaid and often hidden role, Jewish Care recognises that carers should be supported and acknowledged not only for their caring role but as individuals in their own right.

In this recognition, Jewish Care acknowledges that:

- The relationship between carers and the persons for whom they care should be recognised and respected;
- Within the context of statutory legislation, relevant program guidelines, and organisational policies and procedures, the unique knowledge and experience of carers should be acknowledged and where desired by the care recipient, carers should be considered by other care providers as partners in the planning and provision of care;
- Carers should be treated with dignity and respect;
- Carers should be supported to perform their caring role in a sustainable and self-caring framework;
- Caring is a rewarding role however it can also be very demanding and stressful. Jewish Care recognises that carers require their own supports, including the opportunity to have a break from their caring role; and
- Support for carers should be timely, responsive, appropriate and accessible.

Jewish Care seeks to recognise hidden carers, along with all other carers, by acknowledging the importance of their role and providing an open invitation to engage with Jewish Care for additional support, assistance and/or information as required.

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- ⁱ Commonwealth of Australia 2010, *Carer Recognition Act 2010 No. 123, 2010*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, viewed 6 April 2017, <<http://www.comlaw.gov.au/>>.
- ⁱⁱ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, *Disability, ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015, Cat No. 4430.0*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, viewed 6 April 2017, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4430.0main+features402015>>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.
- ^{iv} Carers Australia 2017, *Culturally and linguistically diverse carers*, Careers Australia Ltd, ACT, viewed 6 April 2017, <<http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/about-carers/culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-carers/>>.
- ^v Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, *Disability, ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2015, Cat No. 4430.0*, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, viewed 6 April 2017, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4430.0main+features402015>>
- ^{vi} Ibid.
- ^{vii} Australian Government Productivity Commission 2011, *Caring for Older Australians Public Inquiry*, Australian Government Productivity Commission, viewed 6 April 2017, <<http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/aged-care>>.

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