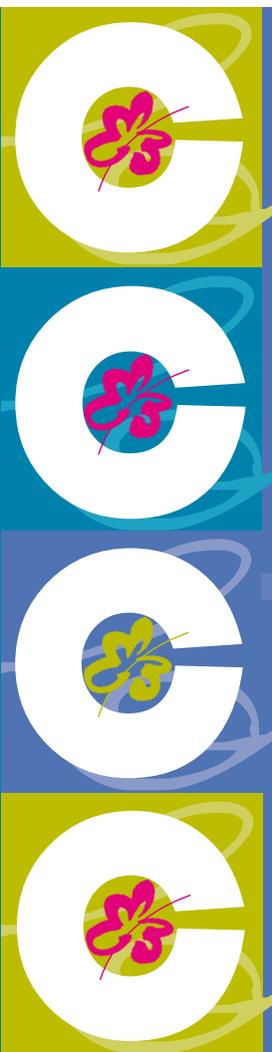


A Victorian charter supporting people in care relationships



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Carers and the people they care for are the basis of the **care relationship**. If the relationship is strong, the carer and the person being cared for are more likely to live as well as possible.



As a carer, you can expect to

- be respected for who you are as a person
- be respected as someone with special knowledge of the person being cared for
- have a say in and be respected for the decisions you help make about care
- be recognised for important things you do that help the whole community
- be supported in your role as carer and as someone with your own needs
- continue to be supported if the care relationship changes.

As a person being cared for, you can expect to

- be respected for who you are as a person
- have your changing needs understood
- have a say in how you are cared for
- be respected for what you give to the community
- be supported if the care relationship changes.

What does the charter mean for carers and the people they care for?

People in care relationships will be:

- recognised, respected and supported as individuals
- respected and supported for their care relationship
- encouraged to take part in care planning, management and service delivery, where appropriate
- able to use what the charter says to support their relationships and their use of services.

How do you know if you are in a care relationship?

Carers and the people they care for can be adults, young people, adolescents or children, rich or poor, and from any culture or country. Carers may look after a family member, a friend, or someone else who needs support. One thing in common for all carers and the people they care for is being in a **care relationship**. This is people involved in a shared arrangement with many qualities, including one or more people providing unpaid care to another or others.

Each care relationship has different needs and challenges. Many things affect care relationships making them complex, including people's age, sex and health, and resources in the care relationship.

Anyone may find themselves in a care relationship at any stage of their lives.

People in care relationships deserve to be recognised and supported. Support begins with protecting rights.

Why support people in care relationships?

Care relationships should be supported so health and well being of the carer, the person needing care and the relationship are sustained. Carers and the people they care for should be as healthy and content as possible. Caring can be a tough job, so supporting carers can make a big difference to their lives, and the lives of the people they care for. While needs of carers and needs of those being cared for are different, supporting the **care relationship** brings benefits to both.

If care relationships are better supported, carers and those receiving care are more likely to take part in planning and managing care. They can also help with ideas about how services can be improved.

The Victorian charter supporting people in care relationships helps bring greater recognition, respect and support to people in care relationships. Putting the charter into practice means different things for different people.

How are rights of people in care relationships protected?

Rights are protected in several ways. The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities is a law about freedoms, rights and responsibilities. State and local governments have to consider this charter when making laws, setting policies and providing services. The charter includes freedom of speech and religion, freedom of association, and rights to a fair trial and equality before the law. It includes the responsibility to respect other people's rights, such as letting others speak.

The Victorian charter supporting care relationships is about the people in the relationship. People in care relationships can expect to be:

- recognised and respected
- supported
- able to take part in care planning and making decisions about care.

Care relationships should be recognised, respected and supported by:

- having community, health, and other care services that support the carer, the person needing care, and the care relationship, such as mental health, disability services and aged care services
- helping all Victorians, whatever their background or culture, to find information, support and services they need in ways that are easily understood
- encouraging carers and people being cared for to get involved in planning and developing services
- improving support for carers, by raising community awareness about the importance of the carer role.

What does the charter mean for service providers?

The charter should guide the development of policies and delivery of services to:

- provide services that suit the culture of the carer and the person being cared for
- provide services that meet unique and changing needs of people in care relationships
- support the care relationship itself
- monitor and test how well service providers support people in care relationships.

What does the charter mean for the Victorian Government?

The Victorian Government uses the charter to guide:

- development of policies, funding and services to better support care relationships
- how programs and services are developed for supporting care relationships and how they are put into action
- other work to support care relationships.

Want to know more?

For information about support services for people in care relationships contact Carers Victoria on **1800 242 636** or Commonwealth Respite and CareLink Centres on **1800 052 222**.



For information about your rights see the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act* – www.justice.vic.gov.au/humanrights

For *Charter for Parents and Carers of Young People who use a CAMHS* (child and adolescent mental health services), Kids' Rights – www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth/camhs/

For the *Charter for Children in Out-of-home Care* – www.ocsc.vic.gov.au

Building eQuality in the Workplace: Family responsibilities – guidelines for employers and employees outlines answers and processes for considering flexible work arrangements for both parents and carers.

See www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au for further information.

The Victorian *Charter supporting people in care relationships* is based on the Victorian policy framework, *Recognising and supporting care relationships* – www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/policy/carers.

Service providers are encouraged to act compatibly with the charter and to take human rights into account when making decisions, providing advice and delivering services.

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