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Acknowledging and supporting unpaid carers during National Carers Week

People who provide unpaid emotional and practical care to family and friends are being celebrated and encouraged to access free local support services during National Carer's Week.

Running from Sunday, October 13 to Saturday, October 19, 2024, National Carer's Week aims to recognise and raise awareness about the vital contributions of Australia's unpaid carers.

Mallee Family Care CEO Teresa Jayet said North West Victoria and South West New South Wales was home to thousands of carers.

"According to Carers Australia, an estimated 3 million people - 1 in 8 - provide unpaid care to a family member or friend," Ms Jayet said.

"Caring is a diverse experience, and many people don't even think of themselves as 'carers.' They simply see themselves as a husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter or friend looking after someone they love," Ms Jayet said.

National Carer's Week is an opportune time to publicly acknowledge the vital role carers play in keeping vulnerable people safe and well, and to thank them for their commitment and compassion.

Carers support people for a range of reasons, including disability, mental ill health, chronic illness, age, dementia or alcohol and other substance use challenges.

"The difference a carer has on the person they are looking after is huge. But being a carer can also have a big impact on the carer themselves.

"Many carers face emotional, financial and social challenges. It can also restrict the hours a person is available to work or to enjoy leisure activities."

"That is why it is crucial that people recognise their caring role and know where to go to access help and advice should they need it."

People living in the Mallee who currently care for a person who is experiencing mental health and/or substance use challenges can access free information, resources and support through the Loddon Mallee Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect.

Operated by Mallee Family Care, in partnership with Mind Australia, the service provides opportunities for carers to connect with other carers, tailored information and individual and group-based support programs and resources.



Media enquiries

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“At the Loddon Mallee Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect, all staff have a lived experience of supporting someone with mental health and wellbeing concerns and/or substance use challenges,” Ms Jayet said.

“Our dedicated workers understand the unique challenges and complexities that comes with caring. We can help carers to navigate the mental health and wellbeing system and provide practical and financial support that can make things a little easier.”

Lynette Carpenter is one of many carers who has sought help through the Loddon Mallee Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect.

“I went to find some support after searching for years and the desperation was lifted from my back,” she said.

“I had lost faith in humanity but after speaking with staff at the Connect Centre I knew I had found the support I’d been wanting to have my burdens eased.

Ms Carpenter encouraged other carers to reach out to the service for support.

“The staff are kind and caring and they do really care. They understand how low people can get and will be there to help you through.”

The Loddon Mallee Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect is located within Mallee Family Care’s office at 122 Ninth Street Mildura. You do not need a Medicare card or a referral to access this service.

For more information call 1800 979 730 or email LoddonMalleeMHWConnect@mindaustralia.org.au .

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