

Carer Gateway FAQ's

Q: What is Carer Gateway?

A: Carer Gateway is the national service for carers, funded by the Australian Government. It includes a website and phone or online services for carers to access practical information and face-to-face services, to assist and support them in their day-to-day roles.

Q: Who can access the Carer Gateway services?

A: Carers of all ages can access Carer Gateway services. This support is available to anyone providing unpaid care for older people, people with chronic illness, people with disability, people with addictions or people living with mental illness. It includes carers who are Australian citizens, Australian residents or those carers living in Australia who receive a visa or have a refugee status.

Q: What are the operating hours for the Carer Gateway call centre?

A: You can contact Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737, Monday to Friday from 8am – 6pm.

Q: For after-hours support what number do carers call?

A: You can still call the same 1800 number (1800 422 737). There is an after-hours team on call.

Q: Who are the Carer Gateway service providers and what regions do they cover?

A:

- The Benevolent Society in partnership with Your Side (NSW1 – Sydney metropolitan area including: City of Sydney, Northern, South-Eastern, Inner West and Western Sydney suburbs)
- Wellways Australia (NSW2 – South-Western Sydney including Campbelltown and Liverpool; and the Nepean and Blue Mountains regions)
- Live Better in partnership with Benevolent Society and Mission Australia (NSW3 – South-Eastern NSW including Goulburn and Wollongong; the Murrumbidgee region including Griffith and Wagga Wagga; and Western NSW including Bourke and Broken Hill)
- Carers NSW (NSW4 – Hunter, New England and Central Coast regions including Armidale, Newcastle and Tamworth; and the North Coast region including Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie)

Q: Do carers have to reside with the person they are caring for?

A: No, they do not need to reside in the same dwelling.

Q: If a person has two carers, are both carers eligible to access Carer Gateway Services?

A: Yes, during the more meaningful discussion with our team, we will help to define what kind of support each of these carers is eligible for.

Q: Are carers able to access Carer Gateway Services if they are caring for multiple care recipients?

A: Yes they are. Each carer's situation will be determined on an individual basis.

Q: Are there any age restrictions for carers to access services?

A: No, carers of all ages can access Carer Gateway services.

Q: What intake and registration options are available for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) carers?

A: We have a multilingual intake team and access to interpreter services.

Q: Is there any support to assist young carers to complete their Carer Gateway application?

A: Yes, one of our team members will have a meaningful discussion with the young carer. If the young carer is under 18 years of age, the young carer can also have a trusted adult assist them with the process, such as a parent or friend.

Q: Are carers able to register for future needs, to avoid having to do so if an emergency situation arises?

A: We would encourage carers to register with Carer Gateway before reaching crisis point. This is the main objective of Carer Gateway – to encourage carers to access support early.

Q: Can a carer access Care Gateway even if the person they care for has a Home Care Package or NDIS?

A: Yes, a carer can still receive support from Carer Gateway, regardless of any other funding received, including a Home Care Package or NDIS. Carer Gateway is separate to My Aged Care and NDIS.

Q: How does the Carer Gateway work with My Aged Care for people over 65 years of age?

A: We can support carers to make a referral to My Aged Care.

Q: If a carer has been recommended to receive Carer Gateway from a different organisation e.g., My Aged Care, does their information automatically get forwarded to Carer Gateway?

A: No, it does not. In some circumstances, an organisation may complete a Carer Gateway Referral Form on behalf of the carer and forward it to Carer Gateway (with the carer's permission). If the carer wants the organisation to do this, the carer will need to ask the organisation to do so.

Q: Can a Carers or Organisation register the carer online?

A: Yes, carers can register themselves or be registered online at <https://www.benevolent.org.au/referrals/carergateway-support-referral> or <https://yourside.org.au/carergateway-intake/>

Q: What is the expected timeframe from the initial phone call, to the meaningful needs based discussion with the team member and then referral to services?

A: This depends on the client's needs and the urgency of required services. Emergency respite can be organised within 24 hours.

Q: Is a discussion about the carer's needs required, to access all of the services that are provided e.g. phone counselling?

A: Yes, regardless of the service provided, the normal meaningful needs-based discussion using the CARER STAR is required to determine the carer's needs.

Q: Can the meaningful needs-based discussion be completed face-to-face?

A: Yes.

Q: If a carer is not deemed eligible for a specific request e.g. respite care are there channels to review other options?

A: We determine each case individually and usually find services for all our carers. If we cannot meet a carer's request, we look for other options such as referring to other services.

Q: What services are available as part of Carer Gateway?

A:

- Emergency Respite
- Tailored Support Packages
- In-Person Peer Support
- In-Person Counselling
- Facilitated Coaching

Q: Are the Tailored Support Packages income-tested or means tested?

A: No, they are not income-tested or means-tested. In fact, none of Carer Gateway's services are income-tested or means-tested.

Q: What does the Tailored Support Package include and cover?

A: There are two types of Tailored Support Packages.

One consists of a \$3,000 annual amount for the carer to use to purchase a range of practical supports to assist them in their caring role. Examples of these practical supports could include, e.g., respite, personal care, transport, community access, domestic assistance, meal preparation, etc.

The other consists of a lifetime one-off \$1,500 amount that can only be used for the purchase of small asset items to assist carers in their continued education, and to support them in their caring role e.g., the purchase of an information technology device or payment for a training courses to enhance their skills e.g., a course about the condition of the person they care for or first aid course or a course to help the carer get back into the workforce.

Q: How often can carers access the Tailored Support Package?

A: The \$3000 Tailored Support Package can be accessed once every 12 months. After the first approval, any additional approvals will be reviewed on a case-by-case and needs basis. The \$1500 Tailored Support Package is a once in a lifetime package.

Q: Is there a cost for the Tailored Support Package?

A: The guidelines as supplied by Carer Gateway do allow for the provider to ask for a contribution towards the package if the recipient is in a financial position to do so.

Q: Does the Carer Gateway provide respite support for families to go on holidays or return home for festivals/weddings/etc?

A: If a carer needs planned respite, they can apply for a Tailored Support Package for respite in the home or to pay for the Basic Daily Fee for residential respite in an aged care home (or a combination of the two), up to the total value of \$3000.

Q: What is the criteria for accessing emergency respite?

A: Emergency respite can potentially be accessed at short notice if care can no longer be given due to an unplanned, urgent and imminent event that temporarily restricts the ability of the carer being able to provide their caring role e.g. due to hospitalisation of the carer, illness or injury. It is recommended that carers create an Emergency Care Plan and make it available to Carer Gateway, prior to an emergency occurring. A copy of the Emergency Care Plan can be accessed at:

<https://www.carergateway.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2019-04/emergency-careplan.pdf>

Q: How quickly are carers able to access emergency respite?

A: Within 24 hours depending on when the request is submitted. Requests submitted out of normal business hours may take longer than 24 hours.

Q: Is a carer able to access multiple services via Carer Gateway at the same time e.g a Tailored Support Package and counselling?

A: Yes, depending on the needs of the carer, multiple services can be accessed at one time.

Q: Are the Carer Gateway counselling sessions on top of the 10 Medicare-funded Mental Health Care Plan sessions?

A: Yes, they are over and above the Medicare-funded sessions. Carer Gateway Counselling Sessions are specifically for carers to help them manage their feelings/emotions regarding their caring role.

Q: Are face-to-face Counselling and Coaching sessions offered in-home or in the Carer Gateway offices?

A: Depending on a carer's needs and their location, sessions can either at the Carer Gateway offices, online or via the telephone.

Q: What support options are available for CALD carers?

A: The same as for non-CALD carers. We have access to multilingual staff and interpreter services, where required.

Q: What support options are available for carers who are First Nations Australians?

A: The same as for carers who are non-First Nations Australians.

Q: I've heard that there is also a Carer Podcast. Where can I access the Carer Podcast?

A: The Carer Conversations Podcast can be accessed via <https://www.benevolent.org.au/services-and-programs/support-for-carers#podcast>

Q: How can Carers without internet access get further information about the Carer Gateway?

A: Once a Carer registers with Carer Gateway, if they do not have internet access, any information will be posted to them. e.g., Privacy Information, Monthly Newsletter, etc. If a carer would like information about Carer Gateway posted to them before they register, such as the Carer Gateway brochure, the carer just needs to call Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737.

Q: Are there any brochures that can be given out to carers?

A: Yes, you can request Carer Gateway brochures by emailing: cgconnections@benevolent.org.au