

MEDIA RELEASE

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Online program cares for carers in the west

Caring long-term for a family member who lives with disability or chronic illness can be a lonely, isolated and extremely challenging task.

Carers are the unsung – and sometimes unpaid – heroes of our community. Many studies show that looking after a loved one can take a heavy toll on their physical, mental and social health.

Now, though, carers in Melbourne’s western suburbs can access some much-needed help and peer support through an online program especially designed to reignite social connection, combat isolation and reduce the psychological distress the role often generates.

Carers Victoria, supported by North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network, has developed a five-session online program called Carer Wellbeing and Connection, aimed at helping carers bolster their sense of personal worth, share views and connect with others in the community.

The program comprises four 90-minute online group sessions, led by mental health experts and informed by carer lived experience, followed by a final meet up for reflection and feedback.

Group numbers are kept small to maintain a safe and supportive environment.

The Carer Wellbeing and Connection program first ran in 2020 and 2021. An external evaluation conducted by the University of Melbourne found it delivered very real benefits to participants, so it has been extended for at least another 12 months.

It is available to carers living, working, or studying in north western metropolitan region of Melbourne, particularly in Brimbank, Darebin, Hobsons Bay, Hume, Wyndham, Macedon Ranges, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Melton, Moonee Valley, Moorabool, Merri-bek and Yarra.

There are spaces still available in the next scheduled group sessions, set to kick off on October 26 and 27. There are two sessions specifically for male carers, with the third open to people of all genders.

More details and registration are available here: <https://www.carersvictoria.org.au/how-can-we-help-you/workshops-and-programs/programs/carers-wellbeing-and-connection>

More activities for carers will be highlighted during National Carers’ Week, which runs from October 16 to 22. See: carersweek.com.au

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ABOUT PHNs

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health, PHNs began operation on 1 July 2015 and are responsible for coordinating primary health care and facilitating improved health outcomes in their local community. Melbourne Primary Care Network operates the North Western Melbourne PHN.

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We acknowledge the peoples of the Kulin nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our work in the community takes place. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



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