

**Monday 11 October 2021**

## **Contact a carer you know to acknowledge they're one in a million**

To mark National Carers Week, from 10-16 October, Dementia Australia is encouraging people to [contact a carer](#) from their network of family, friends and community to thank and acknowledge the difference they make to the lives of people living with dementia.

Dementia Australia CEO Maree McCabe AM said around 1.6 million Australians are involved in the care of people living with dementia.

"For the person in their care they truly are one in a million and it is important for us all to let them know how much they are appreciated," Ms McCabe said.

"A little support can make a big difference such as a call to ask how they're going, offering to visit the person in their care to provide time for the carer to take time out for themselves or sending a personalised, [digital card](#).

"We have created delightful digital cards with space for a short, personal message that are easily shareable.

"It only takes a few minutes to celebrate a carer and tell someone you know that what they do is extraordinary."

Dementia Australia has a wealth of resources and information available online for everyone to access and to learn more about what they can do to provide some support for carers.

"Carers often report feeling they no longer have the support of family or friends, when people close to them withdraw perhaps not knowing how to help or not wanting to intrude," Ms McCabe said.

"Often this behaviour is unintended and rather a result of a lack of understanding about dementia."

In addition to the digital cards the online resources include [seven tips to support carers](#) such as:

- Keeping in touch
- Encouraging them to take a break
- Helping to share some of the responsibilities
- Inviting them out to an outing or event together (in line with government restrictions)
- Encouraging them to seek support if they need it
- Helping them to look after their physical health
- Supporting them to maintain their own mental health

Robyn Mete supports her husband who lives with dementia and says it's important for carers to be mindful of their own wellbeing too.

"It's so important to look after yourself so you can be there for your loved one," Mrs Mete said.



“Connecting and talking with others helps so much and I’m lucky to have family and friends I can lean on.

“Getting out and exercising when you can is so beneficial too – bike riding has been something I enjoy and love getting out on now the weather is getting better.”

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare released a [Dementia in Australia](#) report last month. The report highlights the need for appropriate support so that carers can provide care as well as look after their own health and wellbeing.

The report states that half of unpaid carers provide on average more than 60 hours of care every week. One in three informal/unpaid carers who also had jobs reduced their working hours to provide greater care.

"It is important to acknowledge and appreciate the extraordinary contribution made by carers of people living with dementia, especially through the challenge of the pandemic," Ms McCabe said.

“For the almost 1.6 million people involved in the care of people living with dementia, we honour you and we thank you.”

For the [digital cards](#), tips and other information visit [discrimination.dementia.org.au](https://discrimination.dementia.org.au).

Dementia Australia is the source of trusted information, education and services for the estimated half a million Australians living with dementia, and the almost 1.6 million people involved in their care. We advocate for positive change and support vital research. We are here to support people impacted by dementia, and to enable them to live as well as possible. No matter how you are impacted by dementia or who you are, we are here for you.

For support, please contact the **National Dementia Helpline on 1800 100 500**. An interpreter service is available and the Helpline is open 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday excluding public holidays. The National Dementia Helpline is funded by the Australian Government. People looking for information can also visit [dementia.org.au](https://dementia.org.au)

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**Media contacts:** Sarah Richards, Media & Communications Advisor, 0448 341 628, [Sarah.Richards@dementia.org.au](mailto:Sarah.Richards@dementia.org.au)

When talking or writing about dementia please refer to [Dementia-Friendly Language Guidelines](#).