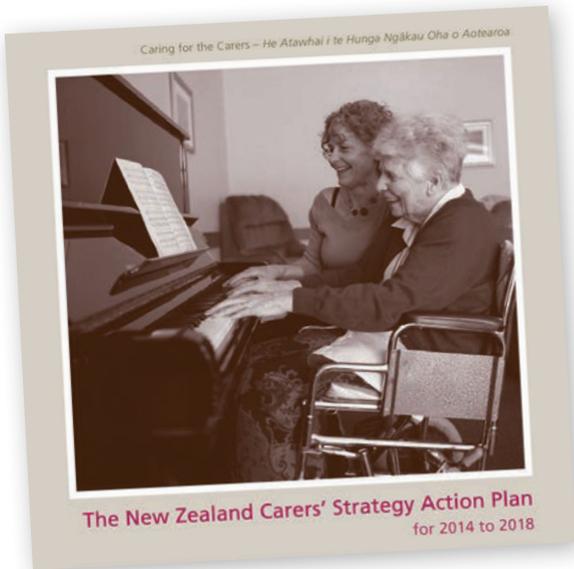


# Carers' Strategy Action Plan

The 2014 *Carers' Strategy Action Plan* sets out what the Government will be doing over the next five years to improve support for family, whanau and aiga carers. Ensuring there is support available so carers can take a break when they need one is a top priority. Helping carers balance caring with paid work and study is also a focus of this strategy. This strategy is building on the previous Action Plan that was launched in 2008.



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It is estimated that in New Zealand almost one in ten people provide care to a family member, friend or neighbour living with an injury, disability, physical or mental health condition, or addiction. The Minister for Senior Citizens, Jo Goodhew says "the vision of the Carers' Strategy is that New Zealand society values people who support others in their everyday living".

In the next 20 years the number of New Zealanders aged over 65 is expected to double. This will result in more people needing to be cared for. Ensuring support is available to carers, many of whom see their caring role as a normal part of life, and don't identify themselves as carers is essential.

There have been five objectives set to guide Government activities in supporting carers for the next five years.

1. The top priority for carers is to be able to take a break when they need to. Respite options need to be flexible, carer-friendly, and available to all carers. The Ministry of Health will develop a range of options to provide greater choice, control and flexibility of respite services. It will also support a carer matching service. The Ministry of Social Development will develop a resource about respite for carers that will include information about government funding options.
2. Carer health and well-being is a high priority. The Ministry of Health will develop practical learning resources to help

carers keep themselves fit, well and safe. The Accident Compensation Corporation will adapt the *Guidelines for Moving and Handling People* so it includes information on the specific needs of carers who help family members, friends or neighbours. The Ministry of Social Development will improve the accessibility of learning and well-being resources for carers. It will also identify ways to help whanau and aiga who would like to learn together.

3. Information and promotional resources for carers need to be accessible, user-friendly, culturally appropriate, and available online and face-to-face. The Ministry of Social Development will work with Carers New Zealand to develop the CarersAir web site and make sure that information, advice, and support for carers is accessible, relevant, timely, high quality, and translated into different languages. There will also be more information available at the places that carers typically visit.
4. Pathways to paid employment for carers are important. Support for whanau, aiga, family and carers to balance their work, life and caring roles are important. Employers have a big impact on carers being able to manage paid work. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment will strengthen promotion of flexible, supportive working arrangements for carers who want to take up paid employment. The Ministry of Social Development will work with Carers New Zealand and employer and employee groups to improve awareness among employers of carers' workplace needs, and to improve recognition of their prior learning and experience.
5. Greater understanding and awareness is needed for carers' roles. The Ministry of Social Development will work alongside Carers New Zealand to promote carer support services and make sure that information reaches more carers, especially those living in rural areas and across different cultures. In response to consultation feedback, the Ministry of Social Development will take the lead to better understand the needs of the fastest growing groups of carers – younger carers, older carers, and carers of older people. Greater understanding will make sure that information and learning is provided in the ways that suit these carers best.

To read the Strategy Action Plan in full you can download it from [www.msd.govt.nz/carers-strategy](http://www.msd.govt.nz/carers-strategy). To order a paper copy email [carers.strategy@msd.govt.nz](mailto:carers.strategy@msd.govt.nz) or phone 0800 273 674.