

MEDIA RELEASE



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Flexible working conditions for family and friend carers in everyone's interests

The ACTU's survey, released on Sunday 27 August at the launch of the *Change the Rules for Working Women and Families Campaign*, highlights the issues faced by carers juggling a caring role with paid employment.

"One in eight Australian employees is a family or friend carer of someone who has a disability, a chronic condition, a mental illness, terminal illness or who are frail aged," said Carers Australia CEO, Ara Cresswell.

"While we understand that not every employer will be able to accommodate flexible working arrangements for carers in every case, it is often in both the employer's and the carer's interest to do so whenever possible.

"Carers Australia has for some time promoted the benefits of combining work and care. We have developed resources to assist both employers and carers to identify a range of adjustments to working hours and leave which can cater to the needs of both.

"Our research has shown that improving flexibility for carers has improved the retention of experienced staff, reduced recruitment and training costs, reduced unplanned absenteeism, and led to high levels of job satisfaction and productivity.

"It will also clearly benefit the community for carers to retain links to the workforce both while they are caring and so that they still have a job when their caring responsibilities ease or end.

"It is to the advantage of both carers and the economy to ensure that carers and former carers are not forced into long-term reliance on social welfare payments.

"We hope that the ACTU campaign will alert carers to the fact that they are entitled under the Fair Work Act to approach their employers to identify changes to their working arrangements that would assist them to manage both caring and working."

Visit our website via <http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/work-and-care/> for Work and Care resources.

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