INFORMATION UPDATE
CARER SUPPORT – NATIONAL CARER GATEWAY

Following the May 2015 Budget announcement regarding the establishment of the national carer gateway commencing from December 2015, the Department is undertaking an important first step to ensure that the gateway will be a valuable resource for carers.

Commencing in June 2015, consumer research will be undertaken by Australian Market Research and will involve important input from over 1000 participants across Australia. Research participants will be involved in a number of different ways including mini focus groups, phone interviews, in home interviews and on online survey. The people contributing to the research will come from a mix of socio economic backgrounds and will include both employed and unemployed carers, as well as organisations supporting carers.

The outcomes of the research activities, will underpin the development of the carer gateway and will ensure that needs of carers are central to the development of the gateway and to the broader Integrated Plan for Carer Support Services.

Specifically, the purpose of the consumer research is to:
- identify and understand the different types of carers (characteristics, demographics, attitudes and behaviour) and their experiences accessing information and support services;
- assist in understanding the ‘hidden carer’ population, who they are, and how they can be reached;
- scope existing information available for carers;
- understand and capture carer information and support wants, needs and expectations;
- identify services that carers are currently accessing and services that are needed but not currently available;
- determine the most effective communication channels for reaching our target market; and
- inform website content development, information structure, service channel preferences, as well as branding and communication considerations.

The Department will also engage the sector through a co-design process to guide the design of both the gateway and the broader future carer service system. This process has already commenced with the Department visiting a range of organisations that currently support carers.

A series of co-design workshops will also start in early July 2015. Further information on the co-design workshops and further details about participating in the online survey will be made available on the DSS website at: www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers.

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