

Queensland Carers Advisory Council Communique – August 2026

The Queensland Carers Advisory Council (the Council) held the first meeting of its 2026-2028 term on 19 August 2026.

The meeting was Chaired by Jim Toohey (Chief Executive Officer, Carers Queensland) and attended by carer representatives Darren Buswell, Jodi Robinson and Cynthia Hoffman (grandparent carer representative). Carer association representatives Catherine Laherty (Community Resource Unit Ltd) Valerie Holden (Relationships Australia Queensland) and Natasha Rivett (ARC Disability Services Inc.) were also present. Queensland Government agencies represented included Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Queensland Health, Department of Education and Office of the Public Advocate.

The Honourable Amanda Camm MP, Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence attended the meeting. The Minister welcomed new members to the Council for the 2026-2028 term and recognised the diverse expertise and lived experience they bring to inform government policy and reform in the Council's advisory role.

The Minister acknowledged the valuable role of carers to the people they care for and in our communities. She welcomed the opportunity to engage with QCAC on important issues that impact carers and to be advised on advancing carer recognition, strengthening system oversight, and promoting advocacy for the needs of carers. The Minister expressed strong support for the ongoing work of the QCAC and will continue to engage with members throughout the term.

Ms Belinda Drew, Director-General Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, also attended the meeting, and provided an overview of progress of Queensland Government disability reform initiatives.

QCAC discussed the current service and support system reforms impacting carers and families. Members highlighted the importance of ongoing consultation and advocacy to ensure carers' needs are recognised and addressed. QCAC also considered opportunities to strengthen recognition of carers, improve service navigation across multiple systems, and better understand the long-term impacts of reform on carers and those they care for.

QCAC was updated on the review of the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2008* (the Act) and considered opportunities to strengthen recognition, participation and inclusion of carers through legislative and non-legislative reforms. Members highlighted the importance of ensuring the Act reflects diverse and contemporary caring experiences.

Members also discussed possible priorities for the 2026-28 term that would build on the actions undertaken as part of the 2024-2026 Queensland Carers Action Plan.