

CARERS WELLBEING SUPPORT HANDBOOK



**Practical tools, emotional
support and local
connections for carers**

WHAT'S INSIDE

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WELCOME

Caring for someone with health, mobility, cognitive or life-limiting challenges is an important role. It can also be physically tiring, emotionally demanding, and socially isolating.

This booklet has been created to support your wellbeing by offering:

- practical tools
- emotional support strategies
- ways to stay connected
- information to help you feel confident and supported

Local services, including Fernlea Community Care, are mentioned where they may be helpful options for carers.

You do not need to read this all at once. Start with the section that feels most relevant today.



Understanding the Caring Role

Caring can involve:

- managing appointments, medications, and daily routines
- supporting emotional wellbeing
- assisting with mobility or personal care
- coordinating services and equipment
- handling household tasks and finances
- balancing your own needs with the needs of the person you care for

Many carers describe feeling stretched, tired, or unsure where to turn. With this in mind, this booklet aims to offer clear, practical guidance and pathways to support.

LOOKING AFTER YOUR OWN WELLBEING

Looking After Your Own Wellbeing

Quick Reset Techniques

- Box breathing: Inhale 4 seconds → hold 4 → exhale 4 → hold 4
- Grounding: Notice 5 things you can see, 4 you can touch, 3 you can hear
- Shoulder release: Lift shoulders to ears, hold, release
- One-minute pause: Step outside or into another room for fresh air

Daily Habits That Help

- Drink water regularly
- Eat small, steady meals
- Keep a simple sleep routine
- Build a 10-minute “you time” into each day
- Accept help when it is offered

Energy-Saving Strategies

- Sit for tasks when possible
- Use equipment that reduces strain
- Break housework into 10-minute blocks
- Keep essential items within easy reach
- Use a trolley or basket to move items around the house

Sleep and Rest Support

- Keep a simple wind-down routine
- Limit screens before bed
- Use a notebook to “empty your mind” before sleep
- Rest during the day without guilt if nights are broken

LOOKING AFTER YOUR OWN WELLBEING

Nutrition for Low-Energy Days

- Keep easy snacks on hand
- Prepare meals in bulk
- Accept meals from friends or community groups
- Use meal delivery services when needed

Emotional Wellbeing

It is normal to feel:

- tired
- guilty
- frustrated
- worried
- grateful and exhausted at the same time

Talking with others who understand can make a significant difference



Managing Stress and Feelings of Overwhelm

Quick Reset Techniques

When Everything Feels Too Much

Try the 3-step reset:

- Pause – stop for 10 seconds
- Breathe – slow, deep breaths
- Prioritise – choose the one next thing that matters most

Signs You May Need Extra Support

- trouble sleeping
- feeling constantly tense
- withdrawing from others
- feeling tearful or irritable
- losing interest in things you normally enjoy

Crisis Moments

- Call for help if needed
- Remove hazards if possible
- Step back and breathe

Contact emergency services if there is immediate danger

Remember: You are not expected to manage everything alone.

PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR EVERYDAY CARING

DAILY CHECKLIST

- Medications organised
- Meals planned or prepared
- Appointments confirmed
- Equipment working and accessible
- Personal care needs met
- Your own breaks scheduled

THE “JUST IN CASE” FOLDER

Keep important documents together:

- Medical summaries
- Medication list
- Emergency contacts
- Legal and financial documents
- Service contacts
- Care preferences

Technology That Can Help

- Medication reminder apps
- Shared calendars for appointments
- Telehealth appointments
- Meal delivery services
- Safety devices such as fall detectors

Time-Saving Ideas

- Prepare meals in batches
- Use delivery services for groceries or pharmacy items
- Ask visitors to help with one small task

Communicating with Health Professionals

- Write questions down beforehand
- Bring a support person
- Ask for explanations in plain language
- Request written instructions
- Repeat back what you heard to confirm understanding
- Ask for important symptoms/signs to be aware of or report

Medical reminder apps that might be considered include:

- MedAdvisor - best for pharmacy-linked script management and reminders
- Carer's Notebook - for whole of care organization



MedAdvisor

PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR EVERYDAY CARING

Preparing for Appointments or Hospital Visits

Keep a small “go-bag” ready with:

- medication list - medical summaries - snacks and water - phone charger - notebook and pen - comfort items*

When the Person You Care For Is Distressed

- Speak slowly and gently
- Reduce noise and distractions
- Offer simple choices
- Validate feelings (“I can see this is upsetting”)
- Give time - rushing increases distress

Support for the Person You Care For

Short-term support for the person you care for can make it easier to participate in community activities or attend appointments.

In Emerald and surrounding districts, Fernlea Community Care supports carers through engaging activities at Fernlea Community House, while providing those they care for with small-group, personalised day respite and community-based support.

Staying Connected
Isolation is one of the biggest challenges for carers.

Ways to Stay Connected

- Attend local community groups or wellbeing sessions
- Join neighbourhood house activities
- Keep in touch with friends through short calls or messages
- Accept offers of help - people often want to support you

PLANNING AHEAD

Useful Planning Steps

- Keep a list of medications and doses time/s
- Record key contacts
- Discuss preferences for care
- Review equipment needs regularly
- Plan for emergencies

Write down the people you can call on:

Names & Phone Numbers

Family and Friends

-
-
-

Neighbours and Community

-
-
-

Your GP details

Specialist details

FERNLEA COMMUNITY CARE CONTACT INFO

Fernlea Community House

Address - 356 Belgrave Gembrook Road, Emerald

Phone - 5968 3895

Mobile - 0424 147 364

Email - fch@fernlea.com.au

Website - www.fch.org.au



Fernlea Day Respite - Emerald

Address - 149 Emerald-Monbulk Road, Emerald, Victoria

Phone - 5968 3895

Email - info@fernlea.com.au



Fernlea Day Respite - Pakenham

Address - 1 Main St, Pakenham, Victoria

Phone - 5968 3895

Email - info@fernlea.com.au

www.fernlea.com.au

Scan for direct website access

SCAN
ME!



STAYING CONNECTED TO OTHER LOCAL SUPPORT OPTIONS

Neighbourhood houses offer:

- Social groups
- Low-cost classes
- Community lunches
- Support groups
- Volunteering opportunities

Other Neighbourhood Houses in Cardinia

- Living Learning Pakenham – 6B Henry Street, Pakenham
- Outlook Community Centre – 24 Toomuc Valley Rd, Pakenham
- Bunyip Community House – 27 Main St, Bunyip
- Garfield Community House – 45 Railway Ave, Garfield
- Koo Wee Rup Community Centre – 255 Rossiter Rd, Koo Wee Rup

Neighbourhood Houses in Yarra Ranges

- Belgrave Community House – 1616–1624 Burwood Hwy, Belgrave
- Upwey Community House – 6 Mahony St, Upwey
- Selby Community House – 1 Minak Rd, Selby
- Mount Evelyn Community House – 50 Wray Cres, Mount Evelyn
- Healesville Living and Learning Centre – 1 Badger Creek Rd, Healesville

Find Your Nearest Neighbourhood House

- **Website:** www.nhvic.org.au/find-a-house

Glen Cooks Food - Fresh Ready Meals

In Home Care and NDIS supported

Website: www.glencooksfood.com.au / 0416 410 321



Scan Me

OTHER LOCAL SUPPORT OPTIONS

Cardinia Community Care

Website: www.cardiniacommunitycare.com.au

Provides:

- home care
- personal support
- domestic assistance
- community access support

SCAN ME!



Cardinia Shire – Local Support Directory

Website: www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/supportdirectory

Includes:

- disability support
- Financial counselling
- Community meal programs
- CALD services
- health and wellbeing support
- family and social services

Yarra Ranges Council - Health and Wellbeing

Website: www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au

Cardinia Myli Library

Website: www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au



FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE

Many carers experience financial pressure. Support is available through local services, community organisations, and government programs.

Local Financial Support

Cardinia Shire Support Directory / www.cardiniasupport.com.au / 1300 787 624
Neighbourhood Houses (low-cost classes, community lunches, referrals)

Organisations That Help Navigate Funding and Support Packages

Care Connect

Helps people understand and access aged care and disability support packages.

They can assist with:

- Home Care Packages
- Support coordination
- Linking with local services
- Understanding eligibility and options

Phone: 1800 692 464

Website: www.careconnect.org.au



Statewide and National Financial Supports

My Aged Care

Supports may include:

- home help
- personal care
- respite
- equipment
- home modifications

Phone: 1800 200 422

Website: www.myagedcare.gov.au



FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE

Carer Gateway

Offers:

- tailored support packages
- coaching
- counselling
- emergency respite
- practical skills courses

Phone: 1800 422 737

Website: www.carergateway.gov.au

Specialist Financial Support Services Australia

Information on payments such as:

- Carer Payment
- Carer Allowance
- Mobility Allowance
- Crisis payments

Website: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au

Financial Counselling Victoria

Free, confidential financial counselling

Website: <https://fcvic.org.au>

Specialist Support Organisations

Dementia Australia – 1800 100 500

Cancer Council Victoria – 13 11 20

Parkinson's Victoria – 1800 644 189

MS Plus – 1800 042 138

Stroke Foundation – 1800 787 653

Diabetes Australia – 1800 637 700

Beyond Blue – 1300 22 4636

Lifeline – 13 11 14

Palliative Care Victoria – (03) 9662 9644

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