



Family &  
Community  
Services

# NSW Carers Strategy:

## Co-design with carers

NSW Department of Family & Community Services  
International Carers Conference  
Gothenburg, Sweden  
September 2015

9/15/2015

# Purpose of this paper

- To introduce the *NSW Carers Strategy 2014-19*
- To explain our co-design process
- To highlight employment projects in the Strategy

# Carers in New South Wales

*People who provide unpaid support to people who need it because of their disability, chronic illness, mental ill-health, dementia or frail age.*



857,000  
carers in NSW

ABS 2012, Disability, Ageing and Carers Australia,  
NSW April 2014

# NSW Carers Charter

The NSW Carers Charter recognises the enormous contribution that carers make to our community. It provides principles to guide the way we interact with carers. Carers may be clients of our service, they may care for clients of our service or they may be our colleagues or employees.

This Charter acknowledges the importance of the Aboriginal culture, disability, age, gender, cultural and religious background of each carer.

- Recognise the contribution carers make. Support them and the people they care for.
- Be mindful of carers' health and wellbeing.
- Listen to carers, and the people they care for.
- Respect and support carers' choices, knowledge and experience.
- Find out what support and services carers need and refer them to those services.
- Respect the relationship between carers and those they care for.
- Recognise that all carers are different.
- Acknowledge that carers have needs and interests beyond their caring role.
- Young carers have the same rights as all children and young people.
- Help young carers overcome any disadvantage they face.
- Carers should have the same rights, choices and opportunities as all Australians.
- Take into account the additional difficulties faced by carers in rural and remote areas.
- Support for carers should be easy to access and available when needed.

## More information

Department of Family and Community Services

Web: [www.facs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au) | Email: [nswcarersact@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nswcarersact@facs.nsw.gov.au)

The full version of the NSW Carers Charter can be found at Schedule 1 of the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010. This is a plain English version. A carer provides ongoing, unpaid help to someone who needs it because of a disability, long term or life-limiting illness, mental illness, dementia or ageing.





# NSW CARERS STRATEGY 2014-2019



# Focus areas in the NSW Carers Strategy

1. Employment and education
2. Carer health and wellbeing
3. Information and community awareness
4. Carer engagement
5. Improving the evidence base

# Co-design

*In order to develop real solutions to complex issues we need to challenge orthodoxies, question assumptions and consider other possibilities*

# More than consultation

Co-design involves:

- Committing to collaboration
- Agreeing on the issue or problem – shared understanding
- Working together to develop solutions
- Working together to implement



Carers Strategy Engagement agencies



Carers NSW



NSW FACS



NSW Ministry of Health

2362

Have Your Say responses

200

Workshop participants

40+

Carers participated in workshops

June 2013

August 2013



Carers Advisory Council workshop

Dec 2013

March 2014

115

Guests attended the NSW Ministerial Carers Summit



Project Management Group

Workshops commence

November 2013

15

Stakeholder workshops

'Have Your Say' online consultation

February 2014

Workshops =

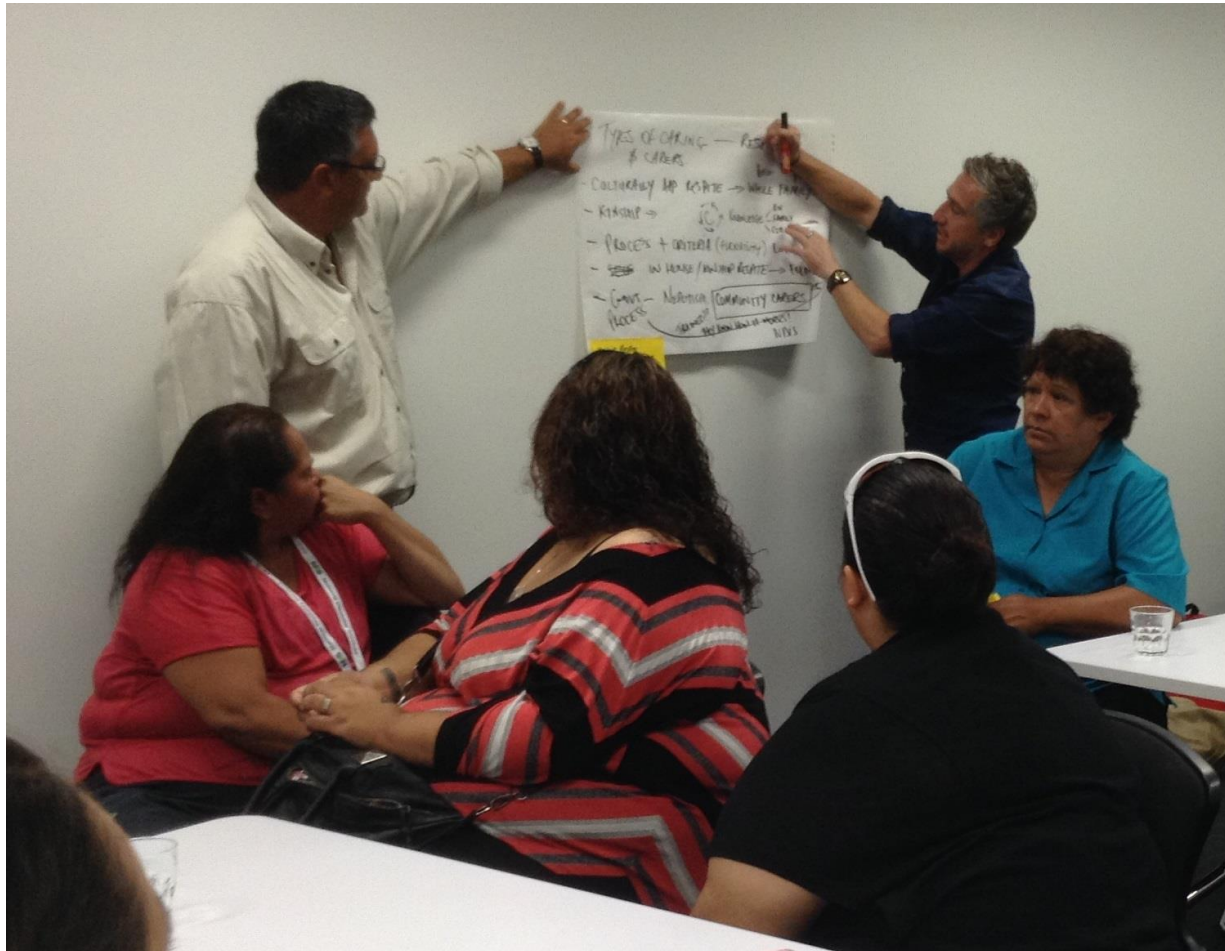


# Stakeholders included

- Government agencies
- Non-government agencies
- Academics
- Business
- Individuals
- **Carers**

# How we co-designed with carers

# Carers were integral to the collaborative workshops







# Carers at the co-design workshops

- 200 participants at 15 workshops
- More than 40 (20%) attended as carer representatives
- (Some of the other workshops participants were also carers)

***“We’re working together in a co-design model which is fantastic because we’re bringing together all the stakeholders, corporates and government agencies and also the voice of carers which is really important”***

Quote from carer involved in the development of the NSW Carers Strategy



***“I found it very humbling to listen to the experience of carers trying to get the balance in their lives right”***

Senior health professional participant at the Carers Strategy, Health and Wellbeing workshop on 7 Feb 2014

# Carer diversity

- Aboriginal carers
- Culturally and linguistically diverse carers
- Young carers
- Carers of people with disability, mental illness, chronic illness, frail age
- Metro and rural/regional carers

# Carers were empowered



# Ensuring carers could participate

We reimbursed more than 30 carers for reasonable travel and other expenses (eg respite) and all received a gift voucher

We **valued** their contribution

We developed this financial assistance policy with our Carers Advisory Council

# Online consultation



- **2,362 responses (and 5,000 views)**
- **58.3% of responses were from carers and 11.4% from former carers**

# **Carers were at the NSW Ministerial Carers Summit**

**Over 30 carers attended the NSW Ministerial Carers Summit  
(26% of attendees)**



# A video of carers speaking about their carer experience - opened the Summit





# Photos from the Ministerial Summit






2) Career information  
3) Community awareness

It brings out the best in me

It could be you!

It's a big beautiful  
Complicated  
delightful  
relationship

It runs 2 ways +  
I get out of it  
more than I give  Kyle

There is a lack of advocacy for consumers - aren't we resolve issues & be heard. The advocacy that does exist is piecemeal & doesn't cover all needs of mental health. The advocacy that is there may be disappearing.

It is crucial for advocacy to continue. Without it a key support for carers will be lost & we will go backwards in terms of carer engagement & wellbeing

Don't forget carers of people with dementia - they're often the only people who can help

ONE THING TO REMEMBER  
One thing to go to result of to



# Results of co-design with carers

- Practical ideas - informed by carers' own lives
- Focussed us on what's really important to carers
- The Strategy has credibility
- Improved our language and messages (resilience and strength-based, not “victims or heroes”)

# Implementing the Strategy

- 16 projects
- Continued commitment to co-design with carers and other partners

# NSW Carers Advisory Council



# Carer awareness campaign

Carers are parents, partners, brothers, sisters, friends, sons or daughters. You can't always tell by looking at them but they are an integral part of our community. They care for (or help care for) someone who needs help because of disability, chronic illness, mental illness, dementia or ageing. Carers are not paid for the support they provide and many continue to work to support their household.

## Cheryl & Rob Koenig

Cheryl and Rob care for their son Jonathan who acquired severe traumatic brain injury after a car accident when he was 12.

Cheryl - "Caring is just as hard as everyone thinks it is. It is physically exhausting. It is emotionally stressful but there is a flipside, it is uniquely rewarding. The best job you will ever do is caring for someone you love".

Rob - "Caring gives me a purpose in life".



# Carers involved in developing new Young Carer App





# Employment - a significant priority for carers

**Identified outcome** – carers have choices and opportunities to participate in paid work

**Our focus of reform** over five years:

- Increase use of existing workplace flexibility by carers and their employers
- Enable carers to recognise the skills and expertise they bring to employment and training

# Employment projects in the Strategy

1.1 Network of employers to champion carer friendly workplaces

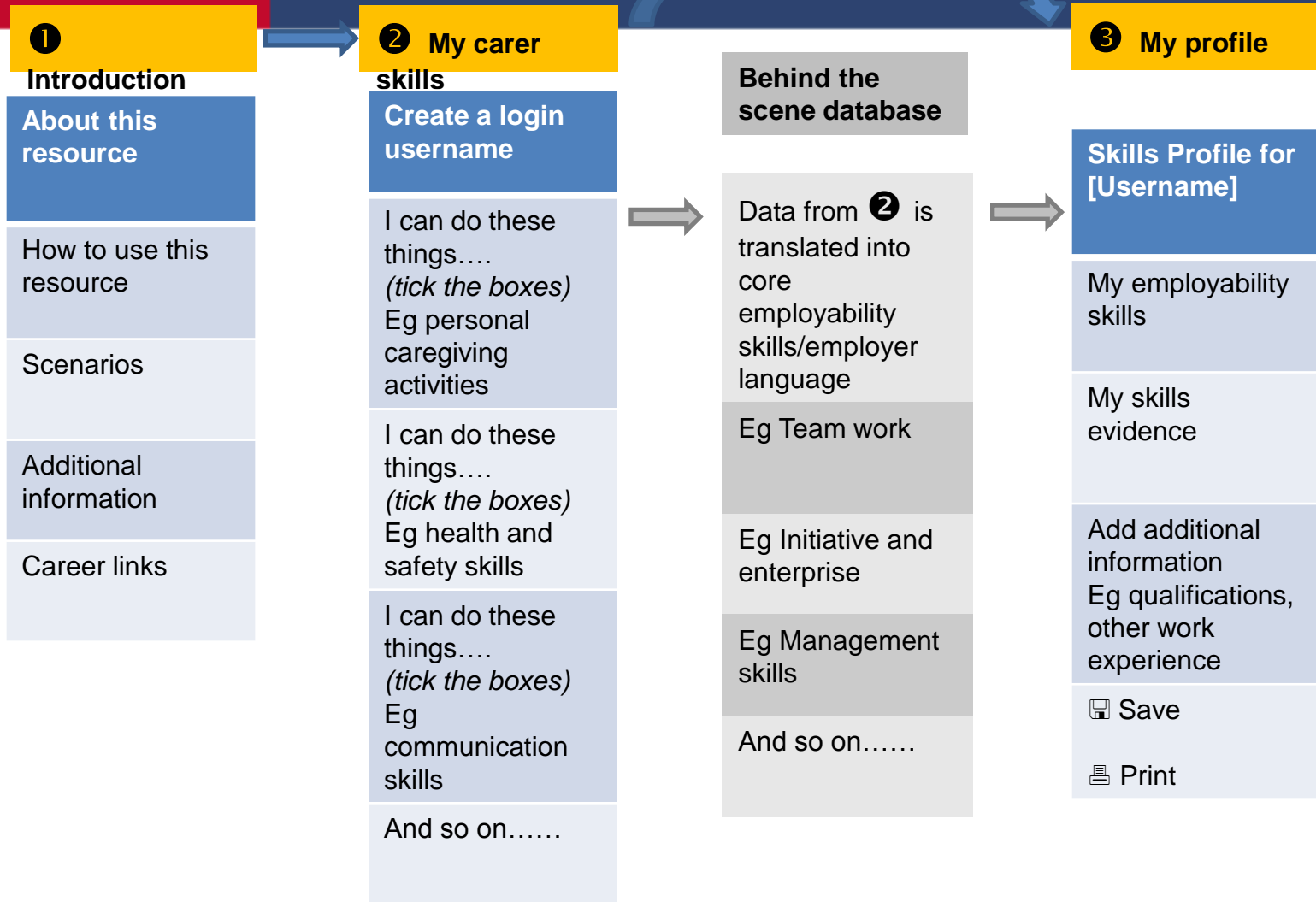
## 1.2 Recognising carers' skills

- *A web-based resource to assist carers to understand how the skills, knowledge and experience they have developed as carers can be used to gain employment*

# TRANSFORM MY SKILLS.....

a carer's toolkit to match skills to employment

DRAFT storyboard



Skillslink® Work  
ft  
csh-itab.com.au  
-itab.com.au

**CANDLES**  
CANCER SUPPORT GROUP INC.  
[EST. 2001]  
ORT  
HP  
FAMILY M  
JGS - SU  
439



ABILITY PLANNING & ORGANISING

COMMUNICATION

DAILY

TEAMWORK

TECHNOLOGY

PROBLEM SOLVING

INFREQUENTLY

LEARNING SKILLS

The wall displays several white sheets of paper with colorful sticky notes (pink, orange, blue, green) attached. The sheets are organized into sections with labels: 'ABILITY PLANNING & ORGANISING' (blue sticky notes), 'COMMUNICATION' (pink sticky notes), 'DAILY' (pink sticky notes), 'TEAMWORK' (orange sticky notes), 'TECHNOLOGY' (orange sticky notes), 'PROBLEM SOLVING' (blue sticky notes), 'INFREQUENTLY' (green sticky notes), and 'LEARNING SKILLS' (orange sticky notes). The sticky notes contain handwritten text, likely notes from a workshop or meeting.

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# Thank you

NSW Department of Family & Community  
Services

[www.carers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.carers.nsw.gov.au)

[NSWCarersAdvisoryCouncil@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:NSWCarersAdvisoryCouncil@facs.nsw.gov.au)

[helen.mcfarlane@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:helen.mcfarlane@facs.nsw.gov.au)