

# Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Carers SA awarded for excellence

Just a few days out from National Carers Week, Carers SA has received the Margaret Tobin Award for Excellence in the Provision of Mental Health Services for its 'Supporting Carers of People with Mental Illness' program.

The program, which commenced in 2008, is funded by the Australian Government's Mental Health Community Based Program and is the first of its kind in South Australia providing support to carers of people with mental illness in metropolitan, regional and remote areas.

Rosemary Warmington, Chief Executive Officer of Carers SA, said the award was welcome recognition for an initiative that was making a genuine difference in people's lives.

"The program currently provides direct support to 1012 carers – including 316 young carers - and indirectly supports more than 2200 carers" Ms Warmington said.

"It gives carers access to education, skills training and mentoring services, and works to gain greater recognition for the tireless work of carers for people with a mental illness."

Ms Warmington said the program's high uptake and widespread recognition was a true reflection of the extra support needed by carers of people with a mental illness.

"Research suggests carers experience startling levels of depression and anxiety. In fact, more than one third of carers were found to be extremely or severely depressed," Ms Warmington said.

While the program is accessible to carers of all ages across the state, the program has been particularly focussed on young carers.

"Caring for a family member or friend with mental illness can often lead to the carer feeling stigmatised and isolated," Ms Warmington said.

"For young carers, this can be particularly hard to deal with and it is vital they know where to go for additional help and support."

The 'Supporting Carers of People with a Mental Illness' program received the Silver Award for Family/Carer Provided Services at the biggest conference for Mental Health Service professionals in the Asia Pacific region last year. Carers SA initiatives have also been shortlisted in the inaugural state Carer Recognition awards, with the winner due to be announced next week.

"We are extremely proud that the work of Carers SA continues to receive recognition at a state, national and international level, and we are committed to seeing it continue into the future," Ms Warmington said.

*The purpose of Carers SA is to improve the lives of the 222,700 family carers across the state. Carers SA provides important services including counselling, advice, advocacy, education and training to carers. The organisation also promotes the recognition of carers and represents their interest and needs to governments, businesses and the public. For more information visit [www.carers-sa.asn.au](http://www.carers-sa.asn.au).*

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