



SUBMISSION TO THE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION INQUIRY INTO CARER LEAVE

Mental Health Carers Australia (MHCA) understands that the Productivity Commission has been tasked with examining the potential economic and social costs and benefits of providing an extended unpaid leave entitlement to informal carers of older Australians under the National Employment Standards.

For the Commission's benefit, MHCA is a national peak body focussed solely on the needs of mental health families and carers. We are made up of seven state and territory organisations, including one national. Our aim is to work constructively with governments to improve policies and programs that directly and indirectly impact mental health carers. More information about our organisation is accessible at: mentalhealthcarersaustralia.org.au

Arafmi QLD, MHCA's QLD member organisation, has provided a comprehensive submission to the Productivity Commission outlining the rationale for supporting carer leave and extending this to all carer cohorts (as attached).

MHCA supports the content of the Arafmi QLD submission and endorses its recommendations as summarised below as being relevant to all mental health families and carers across all jurisdictions:

1. The design of any changes to carer leave entitlement and associated provisions and practices be undertaken within an 'inclusive design' framework.
2. Any change to carer leave apply to all carers covered by the Carer Recognition Act 2010 (Cth).
3. Any change: NOT delineate between 'primary' and other carers; apply to all employment forms including casual and part-time; and impose as few limitations as possible on the nature of the employee's relationship to the care recipient
4. Any change of entitlement be designed to bridge the gap between current short-term provisions and any new entitlement.
5. Any change provides for multiple periods of leave.
6. The mechanism for applying be as similar as possible to parental leave, and explicitly state that employees do not have to justify accessing their entitlement or disclose the personal circumstances of themselves or the person they are caring for.
7. Any change to entitlements to apply across all types of industries.
8. The Commission should consider the feasibility of implementing the entitlement in very small workforces, but it should apply to all sizes of business.



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