

Carers play a crucial role in enabling people to live and participate in their communities.

Carers are individuals, family, whānau and āiga who provide care for someone close to them who needs help with everyday living because of a disability, health condition, illness or injury.

There are approximately 430,000* carers in New Zealand.

The Government, along with the New Zealand Carers Alliance and Carers New Zealand, is committed to supporting carers through Mahi Aroha – Carers’ Strategy Action Plan 2019–2023, the third Action Plan under the Carers’ Strategy.

Mahi Aroha is for all people providing care, with an additional focus on four target population groups: carers who are Māori, Pacific, young (aged up to 25 years) and older (aged 65 years and older).

Mahi Aroha has four focus areas:

- ensuring carers are recognised, valued and acknowledged for the important work they do
- better supporting carers to navigate systems and services, ensuring support and services are received by carers
- supporting carers, including financial support and carer wellbeing
- supporting carers who want to balance paid work, study and other opportunities with caring.

This information was developed by the Mahi Aroha Working Group. To find out more go to: www.msd.govt.nz/carers. For enquiries please email: carers.strategy@msd.govt.nz

* As defined under “unpaid activities - looking after and helping someone who is ill or has a disability” (Statistics NZ 2018 Census).



About 1 in 10 New Zealanders are carers



The value of unpaid family care is \$10.8 billion per annum (2013)
The value is expected to have increased since 2013



Carers span all ethnic backgrounds, with the majority being European and Māori

(European 70%; Māori 15%; Pacific 6%; Asian 7%; Other 2%)



Nearly 1 in 10 carers are aged 15 to 24 years old (8% aged 15 to 24 years old)



The carer population is older than the New Zealand population

(20% of carers are 65+ years, compared to 15% of all New Zealanders)



Carers are nearly twice as likely to be female (63% female)

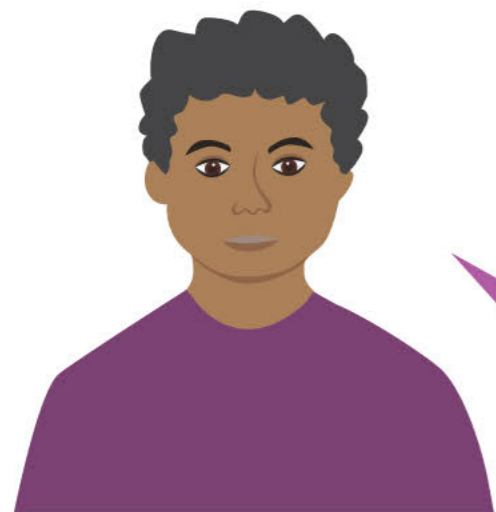


About one in five carers live rurally (17% live in a rural settlement or other rural location)



Nearly two-thirds of carers are employed outside of their caring role (63% in full-time or part-time employment)

Carers have many different stories about how they came to care, their experiences of caring and the challenges they face.



My papa is the head of our ānau and has had a stroke.
He lives at home with us and I care for him. I translate for my papa when visiting doctors as he only speaks Cook Island Māori.
My dreams of going to university are on hold while I care for him.

My moko is in my care and has high needs and I do my best.

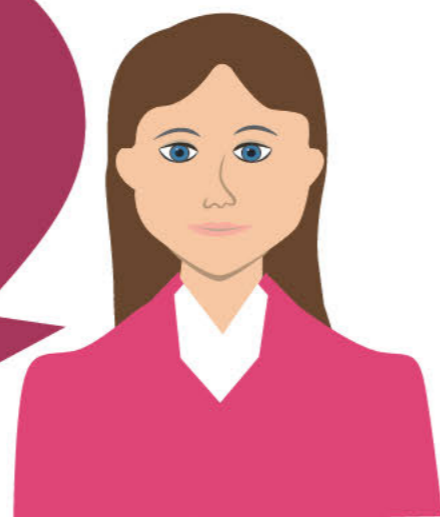
I know she needs more support but we want help from Māori services.

The last time I talked to someone they didn't understand us.



I'm the oldest and I look after my family while my parents work.
My nana who has a disability lives with us too because she needs help.
Sometimes I have to miss school to look after my nana and siblings and now I'm failing NCEA.

My son has a medical condition and needs to be home-schooled so I stay at home.
We have been referred to support groups but we don't want to be treated differently.
I don't see this as a caring situation because I'm just doing what I need to do for my son.



I've just moved to New Zealand with my father in law who has dementia.

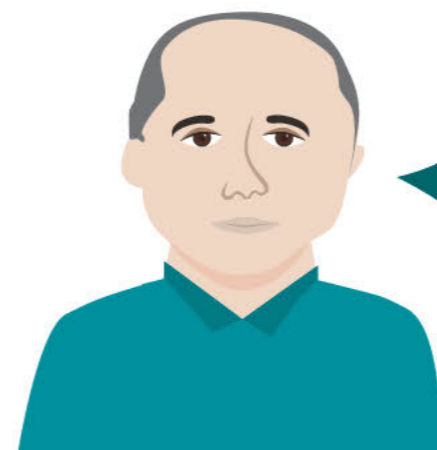
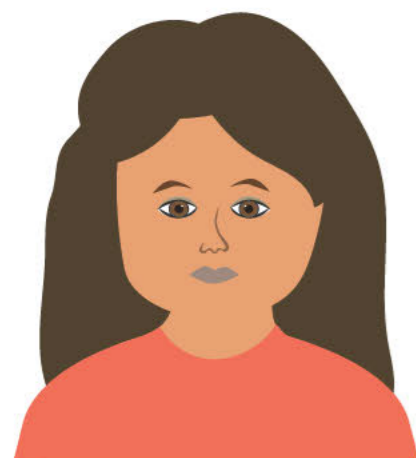
I don't understand the support systems in New Zealand and I feel stressed and anxious.

I don't want to let my family down.



My adult son has an intellectual disability. He needs full time care but I can't keep up with him.

It's so hard to find support services and I don't have the energy to find information. He is getting stronger and I can't give him the care he needs.



My wife has Alzheimer's and has deteriorated recently.
I am having to do more around the house now.
She's starting not to recognise me and I am more alone than ever.
I don't know where to find help.