

Young Carer Skills Project – Provider fact sheet

About the project

Carers NSW has received one-off funding from the Department of Regional NSW (DRNSW) to run a 12-month pilot project that places young carers in paid disability support worker roles in Coffs Harbour, Tamworth and Port Macquarie. We are seeking expressions of interest from selected disability service providers to work with Carers NSW to match young carers to suitable employment opportunities.

What is a young carer?

A young carer is a young person under the age of 25 years who provides care and support to a family member or friend who lives with disability, mental illness, alcohol or drug dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail due to age.

Why focus on young carers?

Young carers gain many skills from their caring responsibilities that make them assets to the paid workforce. However, young carers can experience barriers to accessing suitable flexible work that recognises their caring skills.

The Young Carer Skills Project will assist a small group of young carers in Coffs Harbour, Tamworth and Port Macquarie to recognise and develop their skills by gaining employment as a disability support worker in their local area and improving their employment outcomes.

Why focus on disability support worker positions?

The disability workforce in Coffs Harbour, Tamworth and Port Macquarie is currently experiencing challenges recruiting and retaining skilled staff. While not all young carers want to work in caring professions, many do seek paid work in the disability sector or related fields.

Disability support work often requires skills and awareness that young carers have already developed in their caring role, and can offer the flexibility that many young carers require to balance earning an income with their caring responsibilities and other commitments, such as further study.

Supporting young carers to obtain paid work in this field allows for the recognition and development of existing skills to support their career goals while also helping to address local disability workforce shortages.

What is the role of disability service providers in this project?

Carers NSW aims to work with a small group of disability service providers based in Coffs Harbour, Tamworth and Port Macquarie to identify and/or establish suitable employment opportunities for young carers that also assist in addressing local workforce shortages.

We are currently seeking expressions of interest from selected providers to participate in this project by committing to enable the employment of one or more young carers as a disability support worker in their organisation:

- For a minimum of 6 months, from around September / October 2023
- For a minimum of 10 hours per week, with flexibility to accommodate caring responsibilities where required

Benefits for providers

Working with Carers NSW to place young carers in disability support worker positions in Coffs Harbour, Tamworth and Port Macquarie will assist your organisation to fill roles with skilled individuals that have an interest in the disability sector and relevant lived experience.

Participating young carers will be required to commit to a duration of 6 months at a minimum of 10 hours a week, which will assist your organisation with retention and may provide coverage for shifts that are less popular with employees in other life stages.

Carers NSW will liaise with providers to match participating young carers with the most suitable employment opportunities, ensuring that providers' requirements are met, for example, facilitating and funding (where required) necessary checks and training.

Carers NSW will also provide post-placement support to participating young carers and providers to assist young carers to adjust to the role and providers to optimally support them.

Provider requirements

In order to participate, providers must:

- Be registered providers with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- Deliver NDIS services in and around Coffs Harbour, Tamworth and Port Macquarie
- Be able to place one or more young carers in a paid position for at least 6 months from around September/October 2023, for a minimum of 10 hours per week
- Have a carer-friendly workplace that supports staff to balance paid work with their caring responsibilities through flexible working conditions
- Have a stable and positive culture that is committed to the development of younger workers early in their career
- Be committed to working with Carers NSW to match young carers to suitable positions and to support young carers to develop and succeed
- Be willing to support the design, development and evaluation of the project.

Additional information

In order to match young carers with disability support worker positions with your organisation, Carers NSW will need to seek additional information to inform a 'provider profile', such as:

- How many roles would be available, and what supervision, training and reporting arrangements would be in place
- What are the organisation's service offerings, geographical footprint and general client and staff profiles
- What are the pay rates and other entitlements available to workers
- What the requirements are for the role, e.g. driver licence, First Aid training, NDIS worker screening.

How to participate

If your organisation is interested in finding out more about this project, please nominate a key contact for further discussions by contacting Sarah Judd-Lam at sarahj@carersnsw.org.au or phoning 02 9280 4744.