

# CONNECT

CELEBRATING STRENGTH,  
**BUILDING  
COMMUNITY**

**AUGUST  
MAGAZINE  
2025**

  
**Carers NT**  
Australia



### **ABOUT CONNECT MAGAZINE**

CONNECT Magazine is a bi-annual publication by Carers NT, showcasing the latest news, achievements, and events from our organisation whilst celebrating the incredible work of carers across the Northern Territory.

### **ABOUT THE COVER**

On this cover of CONNECT Magazine, we shine a light on the enduring strength and deep resilience within our communities. Featured is Rosie Yunupingu, captured during a cultural outing to Rainbow Cliffs. Her story reflects the transformative power of culturally grounded care and the journey toward empowerment.

### **CULTURAL WARNING**

This content may contain images or references to deceased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this material may cause sadness or cultural distress.

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# MEET OUR LEADERS

## GAIL MARSH

Chair, Carers NT Board



## MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

Welcome to the August 2025 edition of CONNECT Magazine. This publication serves not only as a showcase of the incredible work being done to support carers across the Northern Territory, but also as a valuable resource for our community.

As we reach the midpoint of 2025, while the year seems to be passing quickly, we understand that for those in caring roles, some days can feel much longer and more challenging than others. During these difficult moments, please remember that our dedicated team is here to assist you. We know that asking for help can sometimes feel daunting, but please be assured that our staff are ready and willing to listen, support, and guide you through your caring journey.

The growth and development at Carers NT has been remarkable this year. Our organisation continues to strengthen as we meet the increasing demand for our services across the Territory.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge our exceptional CEO Steve Vitone, Deputy CEO Chris Hayward, Finance Manager Yugesh Soni, and all our dedicated staff members who work tirelessly across the NT. Together, we are united in our mission to support both carers and the people they care for. The caring role requires tremendous strength, patience, and resilience.

Through this magazine, we hope to celebrate not only the amazing work being done within our organisation, but also the countless acts of love and dedication performed by carers throughout our communities every single day. Thank you for being part of the Carers NT family, and for all that you do.

# MEET OUR LEADERS

## STEVE VITONE

Chief Executive Officer, Carers NT



### MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

As we reach the halfway point of the year, I'm pleased to share some key achievements and exciting developments at Carers NT.

One of our proudest milestones this year has been the successful securing of dedicated dementia funding. This has already had a tangible impact within our community. Two of our properties have now been thoughtfully fitted out to be dementia-friendly—one located in urban Darwin, and the other on a peaceful five-acre rural block. These homes are designed to provide comfort, safety, and familiarity, helping to significantly improve the quality of life for individuals living with dementia and their families.

We continue to see meaningful growth in the reach and visibility of Carers NT across the Northern Territory. Whether in urban centres or remote communities, our services are extending to more carers, families, and individuals who rely on our support. This expansion is a testament to the dedication of our team and the strength of our partnerships.

In the months ahead, we remain committed to enhancing our support for carers through expanded outreach, innovation in care delivery, and stronger advocacy. We are also exploring new collaborative opportunities that will further enrich our programs and better respond to community needs across the Territory.

To our incredible Board of Directors, carers, passionate staff, and supportive partners—thank you. Your ongoing commitment, compassion, and resilience are the driving force behind everything we do. Together, we are building a stronger, more connected Northern Territory.



# CARING TOGETHER, STRONGER TOGETHER

# MEET OUR BOARD

## VOICE OF LEADERSHIP

The Carers NT Board brings together a diverse group of passionate individuals, each contributing unique expertise and personal commitment to supporting carers across the Northern Territory. Their collective leadership drives the organisation's mission forward while ensuring the highest standards of governance and service delivery.





**CASEY KELLY**  
*Director*

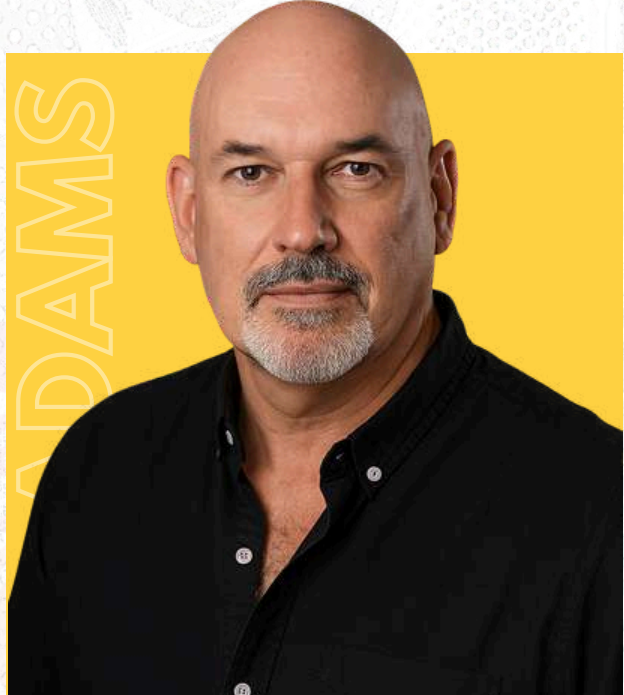
Casey brings over 25 years of executive experience across the Northern Territory, Western Australia, and Queensland, spanning mainstream, regional, and remote contexts. Her extensive background in merchandise, supply chain management, freight and logistics has been invaluable in complex cross-cultural environments. Casey's deep commitment to building sustainable businesses, combined with her strong professional network spanning diverse industries, positions her to identify collaborative opportunities that strengthen Carers NT's impact.

Driven by her belief that strong families form the foundation of healthy societies, Casey is passionate about initiatives that strengthen family bonds and promote mental health. Her inspiration to join the Carers NT Board stems from recognising the vital role the organisation plays in supporting those who give so much of themselves to care for others, often without recognition. She sees Carers NT making a difference by offering support, advocacy, and connection to people carrying heavy emotional and physical loads, and she hopes to contribute by strengthening strategic partnerships and expanding the organisation's reach.

Geoff discovered Carers NT through fellow board members who shared the organisation's incredible work and ongoing impact, inspiring him to join when the opportunity arose. With a varied career spanning business ownership, management, and several years as a business consultant, Geoff brings valuable commercial insight to the board.

His long-standing interest in charitable fundraising has seen him involved in numerous successful initiatives, including organising a corporate golf day that raised \$150,000 for a young girl who lost her limbs to meningococcal disease. For the past eleven years, Geoff has worked in remote Indigenous communities, fuelling his passion for improving health outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

He sees Carers NT filling a crucial support and guidance role for thousands of carers throughout the NT, recognising that services like respite care are essential to the caring journey. His goal is to help expand and shape future service offerings to better support NT carers.



**GEOFF ADAMS**  
*Director*



**SANDY BYARD**  
Director

Sandy brings nearly five decades of nursing experience to her role as a director, having recently retired after 46 years as a Registered Nurse. Living in the Adelaide Hills with her husband and three sons, Sandy has two grandchildren and spent nearly ten years working in the Northern Territory.

Her time at Charles Darwin University as an Aged Care educator took her to remote communities in East Arnhem Land and the Tiwi Islands, followed by leadership roles with the Aged Care Assessment Team in Darwin. During her Darwin years, Sandy developed valuable associations with Carers NT and witnessed firsthand the positive impact the organisation has on supporting primary carers.

Her personal experience as a carer for her grandparents and parents provided deep insights into the caring journey and the support carers require. After more than 8 years as a director, Sandy remains proud to be associated with such a progressive, dynamic, and motivated organisation.

Tony has called the remote Northern Territory home for twelve years, working as a remote trainer with ALPA after relocating from Adelaide where he served as Commercial Manager with the Good Guys for nine years. The move from Adelaide represented a significant decision given his strong sporting connections, including time with the Woodville District Cricket Club and coaching various clubs.

His board involvement came through business associations with Deputy CEO Chris Hayward, and he finds the role extremely rewarding in its ability to help people who genuinely need support. Tony appreciates being aligned with a progressive board and well-led organisation, finding great enjoyment in the collaborative environment.

He recognises that Carers NT has already proven groundbreaking in their support methods and continues striving for excellence, making this an exciting time to be involved with the organisation.



**TONY WEBB**  
Director

These dedicated Directors, along with **Chairperson Gail Marsh** and fellow Directors **Adam Hayes, Martina Hazelbane, Rikki Parkinson, and Terry McEvoy**, form a strong and diverse leadership team focused on growing Carers NT's reach and reinforcing its mission across the Northern Territory.

*More Director bios will be featured in the next edition of CONNECT Magazine.*



# CARE IN ACTION

## COMMUNITY-LED AGED CARE: RAMINGINING CONSULTATION

Deputy CEO Chris Hayward and the Carers NT team recently travelled to Ramingining for an impactful day of community consultation with Traditional Owners, local leaders, and key service organisations. This significant visit brought together stakeholders to explore collaborative approaches to growing and strengthening aged care services and advocacy across Ramingining and Central Arnhem Land.

The consultation united Carers NT with ALPA, East Arnhem Regional Council, OPAN (Older Persons Advocacy Network), and other essential community stakeholders in meaningful dialogue about culturally safe, community-led aged care models. These discussions focused on strengthening existing services to meet both current and future community needs while ensuring cultural protocols and preferences remain central to service delivery.

Held at the Carers NT Lungurrma Respite Centre, the meeting provided an opportunity to share stories, food, and laughter with clients and community members. The gathering highlighted the profound impact of culturally safe care delivered on the country—care that honours cultural traditions, supports individual dignity, and strengthens community bonds.

This consultation represents part of broader conversations happening across the Territory about the future of aged care in remote communities. The ideas generated during these discussions will inform service development in the months and years ahead, ensuring that community voices and cultural considerations remain at the heart of aged care planning.

The success of this consultation was made possible through the coordination efforts of Wendy Cox from Carers NT and the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which enabled Darwin-based team members to participate in person, demonstrating the collaborative commitment to making meaningful community engagement possible.



## SUCCESS STORY: ABORIGINAL HEALTH COACHES PROGRAM

Carers NT is proud to celebrate the outstanding success of the Aboriginal Health Coaches program, delivered through an innovative partnership with Nyirrungulung RISE, Star College Australia, and Katherine West Health Board, with strategic funding through the Indigenous Skills and Employment Program (ISEP).

Over a focused two-week period, nine dedicated students in Lajamanu completed intensive theory training covering chronic health management, health coaching techniques, and self-management planning. The program achieved a remarkable 100% pass rate, demonstrating both the quality of training delivery and the commitment of participants.

Following their theoretical foundation, students have now embarked on a ten-week hands-on learning journey at the Lajamanu Clinic. This practical component allows them to gain real-world experience while building confidence that will serve both them and their communities for years to come.

This collaboration represents more than just a training program—it embodies a broader vision to build meaningful Aboriginal workforce capacity across the health sector, particularly in remote communities where such expertise is critically needed. The program's success demonstrates what can be achieved through strong partnerships and culturally relevant, community-based training approaches.

Special recognition goes to Program Manager Luke Saddler for his exceptional commitment and community leadership, along with all the trainers and students who contributed to this remarkable achievement. The program's success paves the way for continued roll-out over the next five years, with exciting plans to expand this proven model into aged care and disability sectors.

This initiative exemplifies the power of collaborative approaches to workforce development, creating pathways that benefit individuals, communities, and the broader health system. The future looks strong as we continue building these vital capabilities together.

# CARER SPOTLIGHT

## TAMARA BURLANDO



### JOURNEY OF GROWTH

Tamara Burlando's story is a powerful example of how perseverance, education, and community support can lead to personal and professional transformation. Originally from Argentina, Tamara has spent the last 17 years in Alice Springs and surrounding communities, evolving from artist and doula to qualified Creative Therapist—all while caring for her teenage son with a moderate intellectual disability.

Her diverse career has spanned the arts, mental health, and community support sectors. Recently, with the help of Carers NT and the Carer Gateway, Tamara completed her Creative Therapist qualification—an achievement she describes as deeply transformative, both personally and professionally.

"Retraining opened new doors and deepened my ability to support others," she says. Her journey reflects how growth is possible even amidst the demanding realities of full-time caring.

Tamara shares openly about the pressures caregiving has placed on her family: "The lack of consistent respite made it challenging to maintain our wellbeing as individuals and as a couple." Despite these challenges, she and her partner remain committed co-parents, grounded in mutual respect and shared dedication to their son's wellbeing.

"The most rewarding part of being a carer," Tamara reflects, "is witnessing growth—seeing someone discover their strength and build confidence." She describes her son as one of her greatest teachers, guiding her toward deeper compassion and resilience.

Still, the journey has not been without difficulty. Social isolation, emotional fatigue, and overcompensating for her son's anxious attachment have taken a toll. "It's been a process of learning, unlearning, and finding sustainable ways to support us all," she says.

Tamara credits Carers NT for consistent, meaningful support—from practical services like respite and deep cleaning to emotional and educational workshops. Most significantly, the organisation helped her return to study: "That investment helped me grow and give back. Studying again, especially in a second language, was a huge step—and Carers NT helped make it possible."

Now expanding her skills with studies in Feminine Embodiment Coaching, Tamara plans to build a flexible, creative therapeutic practice that blends face-to-face and online work. "It's never too late to pursue your dreams," she affirms. Tamara's message to other carers is one of hope: "No matter how distant dreams may seem, or how demanding the caring role is—patience and belief in yourself can take you there." Her journey is a testament to the power of support, growth, and unwavering love.



# REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS



SPOTLIGHT:

# HOWARD SPRINGS REMOTE RESPITE PROGRAMS

The Howard Springs respite house has experienced significant growth this year, expanding its operating days to meet increasing community demand. June 16th 2025, the day respite program now operates four days weekly from Monday through Thursday, marking a substantial increase in service availability.

Currently supporting 13 clients through day respite services, Howard Springs has also introduced overnight cottage respite for local clients. This new service has already facilitated two successful respites where clients stayed for multiple days and nights with 24/7 care and support, providing their carers with much-needed breaks.

Since January 2025, seven aged care groups from diverse communities including Binjari, Numbulwar, Pirlangimpi, Milikapiti, Maningrida, and Wurrumiyanga have participated in the remote respite program, staying at the Howard Springs facility. These remote respite participants have particularly enjoyed the house's peaceful setting, abundant birdlife, and convenient proximity to shops and family visits in Darwin's suburbs.

A popular addition to the facility has been the free-ranging chickens across the five-acre block, which clients enjoy feeding and interacting with through close encounters. This simple addition has provided unexpected joy and engagement for many participants.

Daily activities at Howard Springs cater to diverse interests and abilities. Remote groups appreciate both the tranquil house environment and excursions to shops, family visits, and beach trips. Day respite clients actively participate in games, crafts, sing-alongs, gardening, and particularly value the social connections formed through shared conversations and activities.



## CLIENT AND CARER FEEDBACK:

The impact of the Howard Springs program is best captured through the voices of those it serves. One day respite client shared: "I like coming to this house because it is nice and relaxing. I can talk to other people, do crafts and I enjoy other people's company." Another regular attendee noted: "The house is nice and the people are friendly. We always have a good chat."

The program's benefits extend beyond clients to their carers. One carer expressed relief: "I feel comfortable knowing my wife will be looked after well, she will be safe and she will enjoy herself while I go to work." Another carer described transformative changes: "Since my husband has been attending Howard Springs, he sleeps a lot better at night and I have had the best sleep I have had in a few years. He seems to really enjoy himself and it's great to see him interacting with other people again. I also feel human again now that I am able to get more sleep at night."

Remote respite participants have also provided positive feedback. A client from Pirlangimpi observed: "This house is really big, nice and quiet and I like coming here to have a break and to relax." Similarly, a client from Milikapiti appreciated: "The house is lovely with lots of space. I love sitting outside on the verandas and watching and listening to the birdlife."



# KATHERINE UPDATE

## Katherine Region Activities & Growth

The Katherine aged care program continues to thrive with eleven active clients enjoying a diverse range of activities and experiences. The program has particularly focused on connecting clients with the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the Katherine region.

Outdoor excursions have proven especially popular, with clients regularly enjoying picnic fishing trips that combine recreation with social interaction. These outings provide opportunities for clients to engage with the natural environment while maintaining social connections in relaxed settings.

Historical site visits have become a valued component of the program, allowing clients to connect with local heritage while enjoying scenic picnic lunches at locations such as Edith Falls. These combined cultural and recreational activities provide both education and enjoyment while encouraging physical activity and social engagement.

The Katherine house itself serves as a hub for creative activities, where clients enthusiastically engage in painting, colouring, jewellery making, and crossword puzzles. These activities cater to diverse interests and abilities while providing opportunities for skill development and creative expression.

The program's success reflects the dedicated efforts of staff who work to create meaningful experiences that honour client preferences while encouraging participation and engagement.





# DIVERSE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES.



# COMMUNITY EVENT: KATHERINE SENIORS EXPO

The Katherine Seniors Expo, held on Wednesday, 26 March 2025, provided an excellent opportunity for Carers NT to connect with the local community and share vital information about our services. Taking place at the Henry Scott Recreation Centre (YMCA) from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM, this free community event was designed to connect people throughout the Katherine region with essential services and support networks.

The Aged Care Team represented Carers NT at the expo, where they engaged with many attendees from Katherine and surrounding areas. The team provided comprehensive information about both Aged Care services and Carers Gateway programs, helping visitors understand the range of support available to them and their families.

The expo attracted strong attendance from across the Katherine region and beyond, demonstrating the community's keen interest in accessing information about aged care services and support options. The event's success highlights the importance of community engagement in ensuring that residents are aware of available resources and can access the support they need.

A particular highlight of the day was meeting Sally, a Carers NT Aged Care client from Binjari community, who attended the expo alongside Andrea, Bonnie, and Alisha, the Katherine Aged Care Coordinator. This connection exemplified the personal relationships that form the foundation of effective community care and support.

The Katherine Seniors Expo represents the kind of community-focused outreach that enables Carers NT to build stronger connections with the people we serve whilst ensuring that information about our services reaches those who need it most. Events like these are essential for breaking down barriers to access and helping community members understand how our programmes can support their caring journey.



# NHULUNBUY UPDATE

## Nhulunbuy Community Connections

Nhulunbuy stands as a vibrant tapestry of cultures, where diverse backgrounds blend into a unified community family. Despite the inherent challenges of remote living, the strength and resilience of our community continues to shine brightly. At the heart of this community, Carers NT provides essential services while fostering genuine belonging and comprehensive support.

The recent addition of a new wheelchair-accessible bus has transformed service delivery for our clients, offering greater flexibility and extended time for meaningful community engagement. This enhancement allows access to experiences that are both enriching and deeply significant to client wellbeing.

The dedicated staff from Timor-Leste have become pivotal figures in our clients' lives, creating bonds that transcend professional relationships through their exceptional kindness, patience, and empathy. Their commitment to continuous learning ensures skills remain current and relevant, while their embrace of compliance modules maintains the highest standards of care delivery. Their presence transforms each workday into a familial gathering, making support feel less like formal service provision and more like a shared journey of care and community.

We are equally delighted to welcome our Filipino colleagues, whose exceptional skills and warm presence have become invaluable to our community fabric. They have seamlessly integrated into essential roles while becoming integral members of our extended family. Their dedication, professionalism, and genuine warmth have enriched our workplace environment, fostering mutual respect and collaborative spirit.

These team members contribute far beyond their professional duties, bringing unity and shared purpose that strengthens our community's foundation. Their presence testifies to the strength of cultural exchange and the transformative power of inclusive community building.

In Nhulunbuy, they represent more than just a service community—they are a genuine family. With Carers NT's unwavering support, they successfully navigate the complexities of remote life while celebrating our cultural richness and creating spaces where every individual feels valued and empowered.



# DARWIN UPDATE

## Darwin Region Service Expansion

The Darwin region continues to expand its respite services to meet growing community demand across multiple locations. Our network of respite houses provides comprehensive care and engaging activities for aged clients throughout the Darwin suburbs.

Wulagi House and Sanderling House are both fully operational, servicing multiple aged clients from the Darwin suburbs each day, Monday to Friday. These facilities work alongside Howard Springs to provide consistent, high-quality respite care across the region.

All three houses offer similar comprehensive activity programs designed to cater to diverse interests and abilities. The consistent approach across locations ensures that clients receive the same standard of personalized care regardless of which facility they attend.

### Activity Programs Across All Houses

The activity programs across Wulagi House and Sanderling House are carefully coordinated to provide clients with choice and variety while promoting independence and social engagement. Regular activities include:

ARTS & CRAFTS  
SESSIONS

COOKING  
ACTIVITIES  
&  
MEAL  
PREPARATION

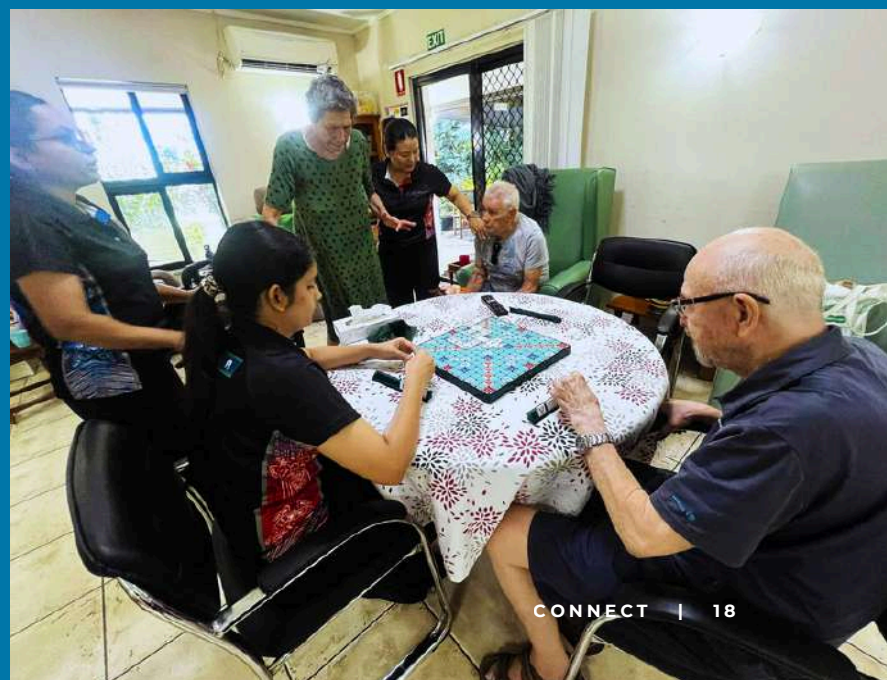
GARDENING  
PROGRAMS  
&  
OUTDOOR  
ACTIVITIES

MUSICAL  
MORNING  
&  
SING-ALONGS

EXCURSIONS TO  
LOCAL SHOPS  
&  
COMMUNITY  
VENUES

Staff at all locations focus on tailoring activities to each client's individual interests and abilities, ensuring that every person feels valued and engaged in their respite experience.

The expansion of services across multiple Darwin locations reflects the increasing recognition of the vital role respite care plays in supporting both clients and their carers. The consistent feedback from clients and families demonstrates the positive impact these services have on the broader community. With dedicated teams at each location and a shared commitment to excellence in aged care, the Darwin region's respite network continues to strengthen.





# PEOPLE & STORIES



# HIGHLIGHTS

## CELEBRATING THE HEART OF CARE: 2025 YOUNG CARERS AWARD WINNERS

Each year, the Office of Disability proudly sponsors the Young Carers Award at the Northern Territory Young Achiever Awards. This prestigious honour recognises the incredible contributions of young people under 30 who care for someone living with disability, illness or frailty. Their compassion and dedication often transform the lives of those they support—fostering independence, confidence, and improved wellbeing.

This year, Blake Franklin-Wellard of Wagaman was named the 2025 Young Carers Award recipient. At just 18 years old, Blake has shown extraordinary commitment in caring for his bedridden grandmother, Ann, since returning to Darwin in 2022. He provides round-the-clock care—managing her hygiene, meals, medical needs and finances—while working casually to ensure he remains available full-time. Despite the challenges, Blake stays optimistic and dedicated, and his care has significantly improved Ann’s health since her discharge from palliative care. He continues to advocate for other young carers and actively builds his knowledge and skills through guidance from his mother and medical professionals. His compassion, strength, and personal sacrifice set a powerful example for all.

Uxel Mason, recipient of the 2025 Somerville Award, was also celebrated for his ongoing dedication. Having previously received the 2023 Young Carers Award, Uxel remains a proud young carers ambassador. He cares for his brothers who are autistic, while also supporting his father after a serious injury. Uxel is actively involved in inclusive community groups like CemeNTstars (a drama group for young adults with disability) and the Darwin Athletics Club, where he promotes inclusion through sport. Balancing his caring role with work and studies, Uxel continues to inspire the young carer and disability communities with his resilience and leadership.

The 2025 Young Carers Award ceremony was a heartfelt evening that honoured these remarkable individuals. Their stories remind us all of the profound impact young carers make—and why they deserve our support, recognition and celebration.





## A YEAR OF COLOUR, CONNECTION & COURAGE: YOUNG CARERS NT IN ACTION



It's only the first half of the year and 2025 has already been a powerful and inspiring year for Young Carers in the Northern Territory marked by connection, creativity, and courageous community engagement.

In April, young carers made their mark at the Youth Homelessness Matters Day Couch Surfing event with Anglicare NT and City of Darwin. From racing couches to painting them in the Exquisite Colours Workshop, the message was strong: every young person deserves a safe home.

The energy continued into June with Young Carers presence at the Darwin High School Expo, sparking important conversations about the realities of caring roles and available support through Carers NT and the Carer Gateway.

In July, laughter and friendship filled the room at Kingpin Darwin, and the fun extended to Alice Springs, where young carers conquered climbing walls and bubble soccer at YMCA Kilgarriff—building new friendships and making unforgettable memories.

Creative expression also shined through the A Stroke of Care painting project, a vibrant collaborative artwork created by 15 young carers and guided by NT artist Riece Ranson. The artwork, rich with symbolism and resilience, will be auctioned at the Charity Golf Day to support future youth programs.

Meanwhile, our Young Carers Peer Support (IPPS) sessions continue to offer safe, inclusive spaces for connection—now expanding to Alice Springs thanks to strong community support.

Together, all these events reflect the heart of what Young Carers is about: uplifting voices, creating space for joy and healing, and ensuring no young carer feels alone.

And this is only the first half of the year—there's more to come.

*To learn more about the Young Carers Program, call 1800 422 737.*

# STAFF PROFILE

## DONNA GAGHAN



### ICCS CARE SUPPORT PLANNER, ALICE SPRINGS

Originally from South Australia, Donna made the move to the Northern Territory with her husband and two sons for her husband's work opportunity. What began as a career-driven relocation has evolved into a deeply rewarding journey in community care and support.

Donna's journey in the caring sector began in Darwin's disability services before she transitioned into dementia care in Alice Springs. When the opportunity arose to join the Carers NT team as an ICCS Care Support Planner, Donna didn't hesitate to embrace this new chapter.

Her passion for supporting carers runs deep and personal. Having witnessed firsthand the challenges faced by unpaid carers through her own family experience—her aunty dedicated years to caring for a son with schizophrenia—Donna brings both professional expertise and genuine empathy to her role.

Based in Alice Springs, Donna thrives on connecting with local carers and works tirelessly to ensure they receive comprehensive support. Whether it's through the Carer Gateway, Carers NT services, or linking carers with other relevant service providers, Donna is committed to finding the right resources for each individual situation.

One of the aspects Donna enjoys most about her role is travelling to remote communities around Alice Springs to support carers in regional areas. These visits allow her to reach carers who might otherwise struggle to access support services, ensuring that geographical isolation doesn't mean missing out on vital assistance.

Donna recently completed her Diploma of Social Work, further strengthening her ability to advocate for and assist carers throughout the region. This qualification enhances her already substantial experience and reinforces her commitment to providing the highest standard of support.

Her combination of personal understanding, professional training, and genuine dedication to carer welfare makes Donna an invaluable member of the Carers NT team. Her colleagues and the carers she supports consistently praise her approachable manner and unwavering commitment to finding solutions.

Donna represents the heart of what Carers NT stands for—compassionate, professional support delivered by people who truly understand the challenges carers face. Her presence in Alice Springs and the surrounding remote communities ensures that carers across Central Australia have access to someone who not only knows the services available but genuinely cares about their wellbeing. We're proud to have Donna as part of the Carers NT family, and the carers she supports are fortunate to have such a dedicated advocate in their corner.



# GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS



# TIMOR-LESTE PARTNERSHIP FEATURE



## A REGIONAL APPROACH TO GROWING CARE WORKFORCE CAPACITY

Australia faces a significant care workforce crisis that demands innovative, collaborative solutions. With nearly 400,000 Australians currently living with dementia—a number projected to double by 2058—we are approaching a future where demand for high-quality aged care and disability care workers will dramatically exceed current workforce capacity. Industry projections indicate Australia will require over 110,000 additional aged care workers by 2030 to meet growing demand.

Carers NT has been proactively transforming this challenge into an opportunity for regional collaboration and meaningful social impact. Since 2022, we have proudly partnered with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade through the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme, the Government of Timor-Leste (SEFOPE), the Northern Territory Government, and the Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) to create structured, meaningful pathways for Timorese workers to contribute to Australia's aged and disability care sectors.

These collaborative efforts have delivered comprehensive outcomes including accredited training aligned with Certificate III in Individual Support qualifications, innovative short-term placements in Carers NT facilities across Darwin and Nhulunbuy through partnership with Canex Resources, and ongoing PALM-based employment opportunities in high-need regional areas.

These partnerships are delivering substantial benefits for all stakeholders involved. Australia gains skilled, compassionate carers to address critical workforce shortages while Timor-Leste builds foundational capacity for its own emerging care sector. Communities across the Pacific region benefit from enhanced regional development and expanded employment opportunities.

Carers NT takes pride in contributing to building a future-ready care workforce while celebrating the Timorese support workers who have become valued team members in our aged and disability programs. Their integration demonstrates the success of cross-cultural collaboration in addressing shared regional challenges.

Aged care represents not merely an Australian challenge, but a shared responsibility across our Pacific region. We believe sustainable solutions emerge through proactive collaboration and partnerships like these, which create pathways for mutual benefit while addressing critical workforce needs. This regional approach to workforce development exemplifies how international cooperation can address domestic challenges while building capacity across partner nations.

# CARERS NT PARTNERS WITH CONNECT OS: TOGETHER FOR GREATER IMPACT

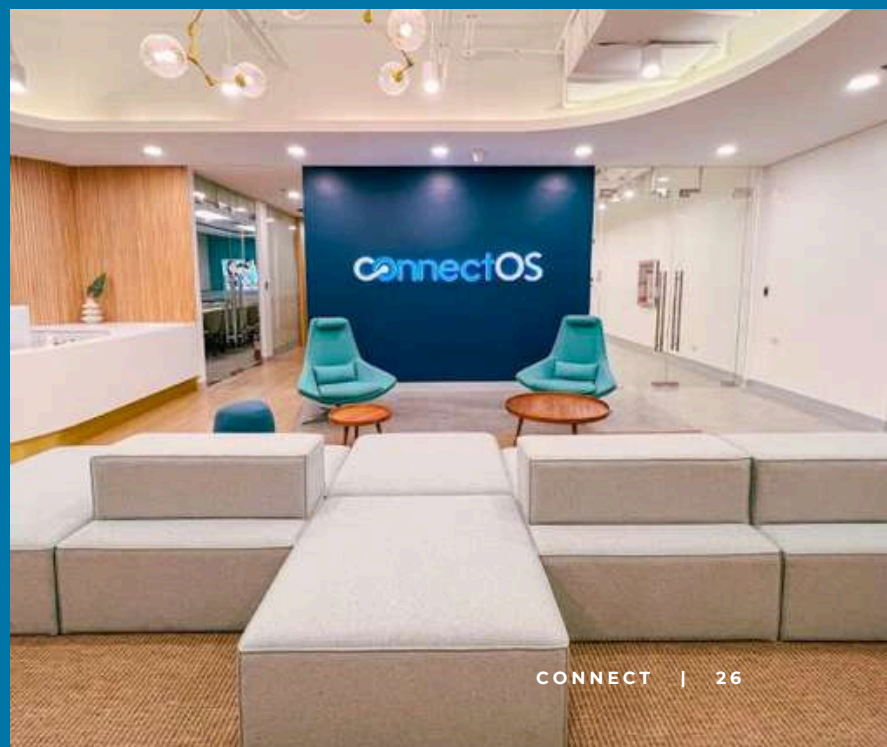
In an era where organisations must adapt to meet evolving community needs, Carers NT has formed a strategic partnership with ConnectOS, an established offshoring provider that has been transforming how businesses access global talent and optimise operations. This collaboration represents a significant step forward in Carers NT's mission to support carers across Australia.

ConnectOS brings more than a decade of expertise in helping business leaders find innovative solutions to skills challenges, supporting enterprise clients throughout Australia, North America, and Europe. The company has positioned itself at the forefront of the offshoring industry's evolution, witnessing firsthand how the Philippines has emerged as a hub for skilled professionals.

This strategic collaboration enables Carers NT to access a broader talent pool whilst maintaining the high standards of service and care that define the organisation. The partnership extends well beyond simple staffing solutions—it represents a carefully considered approach to identifying individuals who genuinely understand and embrace Carers NT's mission to support carers across Australia.

The selection process is rigorous and values-driven. ConnectOS works closely with Carers NT to ensure that potential team members not only possess the necessary technical skills but also demonstrate a genuine commitment to the caring sector. This approach recognises that supporting carers requires more than professional competence—it demands empathy, understanding, and a personal connection to the cause.

Through careful selection and comprehensive integration processes, ConnectOS ensures that new team members bring valuable professional skills whilst sharing the organisation's core values and commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of carers and their families. This meticulous approach allows Carers NT to expand its capacity whilst preserving the personal touch and genuine care that distinguishes the organisation in the sector.



# MEET OUR NEW MEMBER

NICOLENE ZENA



connectOS

An exemplary demonstration of this partnership's success is Nicolene Zena Ramos, who has joined the Carers NT team as Social Media, Marketing and Communications Officer through the ConnectOS collaboration. Working from the ConnectOS office in the Philippines while serving Carers NT's Darwin, Australia operations, Nicolene represents the new generation of offshore professionals who bring both technical expertise and genuine passion for their work.

Nicolene's integration into the Carers NT team has been seamless. She has embraced both the office environment and the opportunity to help carers—a mission that resonates particularly strongly with her personal values and professional aspirations. Her commitment to supporting carers is both professional and deeply personal, reflecting the kind of authentic dedication that Carers NT seeks in its team members.

What makes this partnership even more remarkable is the opportunity for Nicolene to visit the Carers NT facilities in Darwin, Australia. This unique experience allowed her to experience firsthand the work environment, meet colleagues face-to-face, and conduct site visits with clients in Darwin at the facilities that Carers NT has developed specifically for them. Nicolene learned immensely during this short trip and values this experience forever—it provided her with invaluable insights into the organisation's day-to-day operations and the real impact of her work on the lives of carers and their families.

This personal connection and opportunity for direct engagement is precisely what Carers NT values in its partnership with ConnectOS. The collaboration isn't simply about finding skilled workers; it's about identifying individuals who can genuinely contribute to the organisation's mission and have the chance to experience it firsthand.

As this partnership develops, both organisations remain committed to continuous improvement and adaptation. The collaboration provides a platform for innovation in service delivery, enabling Carers NT to explore new ways of supporting carers whilst maintaining the quality and personal touch that clients value.

This partnership between Carers NT and ConnectOS exemplifies how modern organisations can leverage global opportunities whilst remaining true to their local mission. It provides a roadmap for sustainable growth in the caring sector and demonstrates that with the right approach, dedicated professionals can make a meaningful impact supporting Australia's carers and their families.



# SPECIAL FEATURES SHOWCASING NUMBULWAR'S ARTISTRY



The talented women from Carers NT's Aged Care Remote Respite program in Numbulwar continue to demonstrate exceptional artistry through their beautiful pandanus craftwork. These skilled artisans proudly share their cultural knowledge and traditional techniques while creating stunning pieces that reflect their deep connection to country and culture.

Last year, these remarkable artists showcased their work in Darwin, highlighting the rich artistic traditions of Numbulwar and demonstrating the high quality and cultural significance of their creations. Their artwork represents more than mere craft—it embodies cultural continuity, skill transmission, and community pride.

The pandanus work created by these women serves as a bridge between traditional knowledge and contemporary appreciation, allowing broader communities to understand and value Indigenous artistic traditions. Through their participation in the aged care program, these artisans continue sharing their expertise while maintaining cultural practices that have been passed down through generations. Their artistic contributions enrich both the respite program experience and broader community understanding of Indigenous culture, creating meaningful connections that extend well beyond program boundaries.





# DARWIN CHARITY GOLF DAY

 Carers NT  
Australia

## CARERS NT PALMERSTON GOLF DAY: A WINNING DAY FOR COMMUNITY AND CONNECTION

On 11 July 2025, the Palmerston Golf and Country Club came alive with the spirit of community as 16 teams teed off for the Carers NT Palmerston Golf Day. The event brought together friendly competition, local generosity, and shared purpose—raising essential funds to support carers across the Northern Territory.

Hosted by the ever-energetic Amy Hetherington, the day featured lively competitions including Nearest to Pin, Longest Drive, and the humorous Wooden Spoon award. Team ACES took home top honours, but the real winners were the carers who will benefit from the event's incredible fundraising efforts.

The success of the day was made possible through the outstanding support of sponsors. Chamber of Commerce NT, our Diamond Sponsor, led the way with generous backing. Platinum Sponsors included Paywise, Gallagher, Territory Health Services (THS), and Call2View, all of whom played a vital role in bringing the event to life.

Gold Sponsors such as ARCA Global Consulting and Bendigo Bank Area9, and Emerald Sponsor Chess Electrical, contributed significantly to the day's success. Our valued Hole Sponsors—Canex Resources, Darwin Port, and Perform HR—helped make the course experience professional and enjoyable.

Commonwealth Bank brought extra excitement by sponsoring the Nearest to Pin competition, while Territory Springwater kept everyone cool and refreshed as our Supporting Sponsor.

Adding even more heart to the day were our generous donors, including NT Major Events Company, Outback Engrave, Pina from bellaBAR, Darwin Trailer Boat Club, Palmerston Golf Club, AA&P Events, Rodeo Promotions, The Midway Berrimah, and the Royal Darwin Show.

A special thank you goes to AA&P Events and PR for flawlessly organising the day, ensuring every detail—from logistics to atmosphere—was perfectly executed.

The 2025 Golf Day wasn't just a sporting event—it was a showcase of what's possible when community, compassion, and commitment come together. With sponsors and players already eager for 2026, it's clear this annual tradition is only getting stronger.



# PALMERSTON GOLF DAY



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## 2025

# 29

### AUGUST

**CARERS NT CHARITY  
GOLF DAY- GOVE**

#### Gove Country Club

A community golf event in support of Carers NT's aged and disability care services. Proceeds will contribute to the purchase of a wheelchair-accessible Hi-Ace minibus.



# 12

### OCTOBER

**CARERS WEEK 2025  
DARWIN**

**Time:** 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**Venue:** Casuarina Swimming Aquatics and Leisure Centre

**Address:** 17 Gsell Street, Casuarina

**Activities:** Free entry, sausage sizzle, face painting, and aquatic fun.

# 12

### OCTOBER

**CARERS WEEK 2025  
ALICE SPRINGS**

**Time:** 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**Venue:** Alice Springs Aquatic and Leisure Centre

**Address:** 10 Speed Street, The Gap

**Activities:** Free sausage sizzle, face painting, and water activities.

# 12

### OCTOBER

**CARERS WEEK 2025  
KATHERINE**

**Time:** 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**Venue:** Katherine Roller Skating Rink, Henry Scott Recreation

**Centre Address:** Lot 2524 Stuart Highway, Katherine

**Activities:** Free entry, skate hire, and sausage sizzle.

# 12

### OCTOBER

**CARERS WEEK 2025  
NHULUNBUY**

**Time:** 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**Venue:** Nhulunbuy Aquatic Centre

**Address:** 16 Westal Street, Nhulunbuy

**Activities:** Free entry, sausage sizzle, and aquatic fun.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & SPONSORS

Carers NT extends our sincere thanks to all who make our work possible. Through the unwavering support of our partners, we continue to deliver meaningful services that improve the lives of carers and families across the Northern Territory.

We acknowledge the continued support of the Australian Government Department of Social Services, the Department of Health, and the Northern Territory Government. Your commitment enables us to provide vital carer support programs throughout the region.

We also thank our dedicated board, staff, volunteers, and community partners for their compassion and service, and our international collaborators in Timor-Leste and the Philippines for fostering a global spirit of care. A special thank you to the generous sponsors of our Golf Day event—your support helps us raise awareness and vital funds to continue our mission.

Above all, we honour the carers themselves—whose strength, love, and resilience inspire everything we do.

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Carers NT welcomes community involvement in various forms, recognizing that strong communities are built through shared participation and mutual support. Whether you're interested in making a donation or simply learning more about our services, there are numerous ways to contribute to our mission.

**Donation and Fundraising Support** - Financial contributions directly support service expansion and equipment purchases that enhance our ability to serve carers and their families. Our current fundraising priorities include wheelchair-accessible vehicles and technology upgrades that improve service delivery across remote areas.

**Community Partnerships** - We actively seek partnerships with businesses, community organisations, and service clubs that share our commitment to supporting carers. These partnerships can take various forms, from event sponsorship to collaborative service delivery initiatives.

**Service Access** - If you are a carer or know someone who could benefit from our services, we encourage you to contact us for information about available programs. Our comprehensive services include respite care, counselling, education, advocacy, and community support programs designed to meet diverse needs.

For current information about events, services, and opportunities to get involved, please visit our website or follow our social media channels where we regularly share updates about our programs and community activities.







**CONNECT is produced by Carers NT**

For further information on our events and services, visit our website, social media pages or contact us on  
08 8944 4888 | 1800 422 737 | [carersnt@carersnt.asn.au](mailto:carersnt@carersnt.asn.au) | PO Box 40135 Casuarina NT 0810

**Darwin Harry's Place,**  
1 Willeroo Street, Tiwi

**Howard Springs**  
185 Bastin Road

**Alice Springs Unit**  
1, 9 Parsons Street

**Nhulunbuy Shop 4,**  
Endeavour Square

**Carers NT is supported by:**

Australian Government - Department of Social Services  
Australian Government - Department of Health  
Northern Territory Government



[www.carersnt.asn.au](http://www.carersnt.asn.au)