



MEDIA RELEASE

**EMBARGOED TILL 12 MIDDAY
MONDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2015**

STATE WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR NATIONAL CARER AWARDS

VICTORIA: Life Without Barriers and Carers Australia have today announced the Victorian state winners for the National Carer Awards 2015.

The winners were announced at a ceremony at Parliament House Melbourne and were presented by the Hon. Gabrielle Williams MP Parliamentary Secretary for Carers and Volunteers.

The national awards recognise and celebrate unpaid carers and foster and kinship carers for the extraordinary contribution they make to the community.

Mulu Mihreteab, Shayna Henry-Camilleri and Auraria Steele were named as state winners for Victoria. The winners were named across three categories: Family Carer, Foster and Kinship Carer, and Young Carer aged 25 years and under, respectively.

There are over 2.7 million ¹ unpaid carers in Australia of which over 770,000 are primary carers. There are a further 9,000 people who are foster carers and thousands more who care for a child who is known or related to them but not their own, known as kinship carers.

Chief Executive of Life Without Barriers Claire Robbs said carers often take on an immense workload and the National Carer Awards has been developed to raise awareness and understanding in the community.

“The state winners of the National Carer Awards have been recognised for the extraordinary unpaid support they provide. These carers work quietly behind the scenes and often it’s a long term commitment on their behalf,” Ms Claire Robbs said.

“Anyone, any time, can become a carer. The chances are you personally *are* a carer, *need* a carer or *know* a carer. Carers are an integral part of Australia’s health system and are the foundation of our aged, disability, palliative and community care systems,” said Carers Australia CEO Ara Creswell.

¹ ABS 2012, Survey of Disability, Ageing & Carers

State and territory winners will be in the running to receive a national carer award across the three categories (one winner per category): Family Carer, Foster and Kinship Carer, Young Carer aged 25 years and under. Carers eligible for these awards are unpaid but may be receiving carer-related government payment or a reimbursement.

The National Carer Awards is a partnership between Carers Australia and Life Without Barriers and runs in every state and territory.

The Awards are funded by the Department of Social Services.

The national award winners will be announced in February 2016. To learn more about the National Carer Awards 2015 visit www.carerawards.com.au.

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For an interview or to organise photos please contact:

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About Life Without Barriers:

Life Without Barriers has grown from humble beginnings into one of the most significant not-for-profit organisations in Australia, delivering services in over 250 communities across Australia and New Zealand. Our community-based programs assist children and young people, people with a disability, older Australians, and vulnerable and marginalised communities.

About Carers Australia:

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing Australia's carers, advocating on behalf of Australia's carers to influence policies and services at a national level. It works collaboratively with partners and its member organisations, the Network of state and territory Carers Associations, to deliver a range of essential national carer services.

References

¹. ABS (2012) *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers*.