



The Government's decision to allocate \$23 million a year to family carers of adult children with disability needs seems positive, but it does not bear scrutiny, says the New Zealand Carers Alliance.

The Alliance, a coalition of 45 national non-profit organisations, says the Government's move will help a limited number of families.

The Government expects 1,600 people to be eligible. On those numbers, the \$23 million is an average of \$14,000 each. And the payment will be earned at the minimum wage.

"We had hoped this announcement would be a thoughtful first step to recognise the work of family carers, but it seems anyone not in the 1,600 group is unlikely to get anything," says Carers NZ Chair Roger Palairet.

The Bill introduced into Parliament as part of this week's Budget package is designed to shut down any further claims or entitlements.

"No wonder carers are disappointed," says John Forman, Chair of the Carers Alliance.

Payment for family carers is an issue governments are considering worldwide. With more people living for longer in the community with higher health or disability support needs than past generations, assistance for those providing care also has to advance, they say.

"Often family carers have had to sacrifice their own career opportunities and paid employment to provide intensive support for family members," says Mr Palairet. "Their lives can easily spiral into poverty, compromising their wellbeing and their ability to provide long-term support to loved ones."

"The aim of the carer movement in New Zealand and around the world is to increase the recognition and respect for family carers, who are the biggest health workforce. These Budget decisions responding to the Government's longstanding breach of the Human Rights Act shows we have a long way to go to achieve proper recognition and respect for family carers in New Zealand."

Carers NZ and the Carers Alliance have called on all political parties to ensure fair long-term solutions for the challenges of ageing, caring, and disability support.

**[Click here](#)** to read the Health Minister's announcement, and you can find further information about the new policy at the **[Ministry of Health's website](#)**, along with questions and answers.

## CONTACTS

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