

MIC 2/8/04



## Sharing the Care: the Future of Caring in Australia

### Executive Summary

#### The Premise

We start with the premise that **the current place of caring in our society is not sustainable.**

Too many people who provide care are in poor health, face financial hardship and social isolation and are not supported sufficiently by services.

In the future more people will be needed to provide care as the population ages.

This provides a set of policy dilemmas for government: we need more services, but this will be expensive; we need more people to care but caring is unattractive and costly to individuals; we need more people to participate in the workforce to support an ageing population.

#### The way forward

Our submission argues that there is a way forward through these dilemmas.

- **Caring as an activity needs to be repositioned as a valued, commonplace and expected thing to do across the lifecycle.**
- **Caring should not carry the risks to individuals it does today.**
- **We must find ways in which caring can be shared more equally between individuals and services, within families and between genders.**

**The way to achieve this involves a systemic policy approach,** one which acknowledges the complex ways in which policies interact and affect the lives of those caring and those being cared for. If we can make it possible for more people to balance caring within their lives, we can address the need for more people to care and also increase workforce participation.

**Many people caring have had to give up working altogether** to meet their care responsibilities because:

- The income support and taxation systems do not make it worth their while to combine paid work and care work;
- Sufficiently flexible paid work does not always exist; and importantly
- Alternative care services for those wanting to work are not readily available.

Consequently those caring are much worse off financially than those who can participate in paid work. They are more likely experience social exclusion.

### **3. Services for people needing care and providing care**

Better services must be made available for people with a disability or chronic illness and those who care for them to ensure they have access to a variety of options and choices. Services must be available, accessible, affordable, flexible and of good quality.

#### **Expand services to support participation in paid work**

- There are significant gaps in the availability of alternative care services.
- There is a need for government subsidised programs to support participation in paid work and to provide quality, personalised and meaningful experiences for the person needing care. (Examples include cottage care or host homes for older people and out of hours and vacation care programs for adolescents and adults with lifelong disabilities)

#### **Expand key services**

Funding growth is required for a variety of key support programs. This includes:

- Real funding growth for the Home and Community Care Program;
- Extending the number and bands of aged care packages;
- Investment in disability accommodation support;
- The development of Disability Care Planning Ratios;
- Strengthening the psychosocial community support and housing systems for people with a psychiatric disability; and
- Addressing the increasingly pressing needs of ageing parent carers.

**Reduce fragmentation and duplication** in community services to produce efficiency gains and better coordination. This may be achieved by:

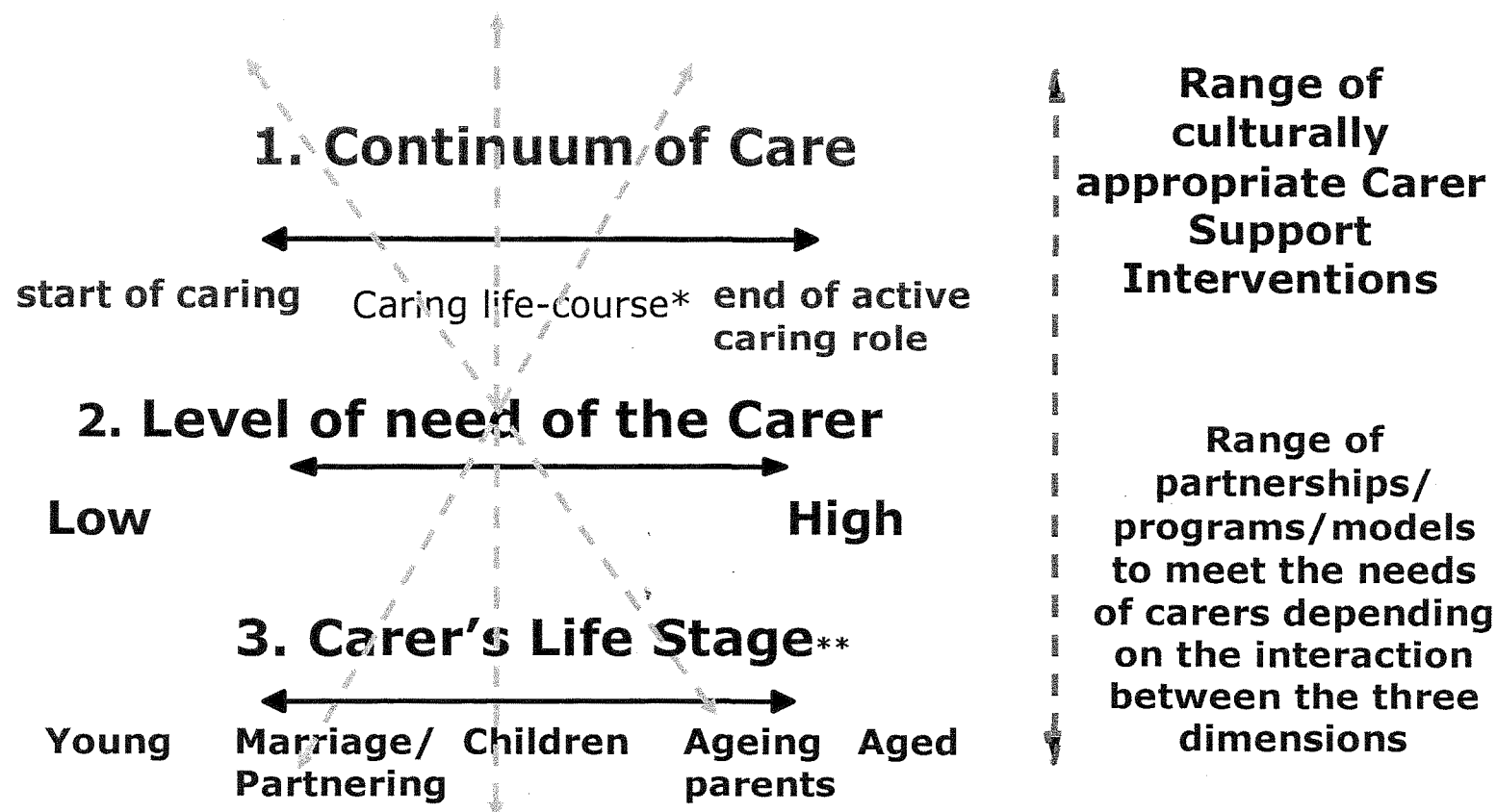
- Strategic use of funding rounds to reshape services infrastructure.
- Improved collaborative planning between Commonwealth, state and territory governments.
- The introduction of an expanded national, no fault personal injury scheme.
- Integration and coordination of separate initiatives targeted at ageing parent carers.

**Reshape program policies** to better recognise the needs of those who care. The development of a national 'Recognising and supporting care' policy framework is needed.

**Further Government commissioned work** is required in the following areas.

- To analyse and model the economic implications of our proposed changes to income security, taxation and superannuation policies;
- To devise strategies for ensuring sustainable funding for long term community care; and
- To address the issue of sustaining the community care workforce.

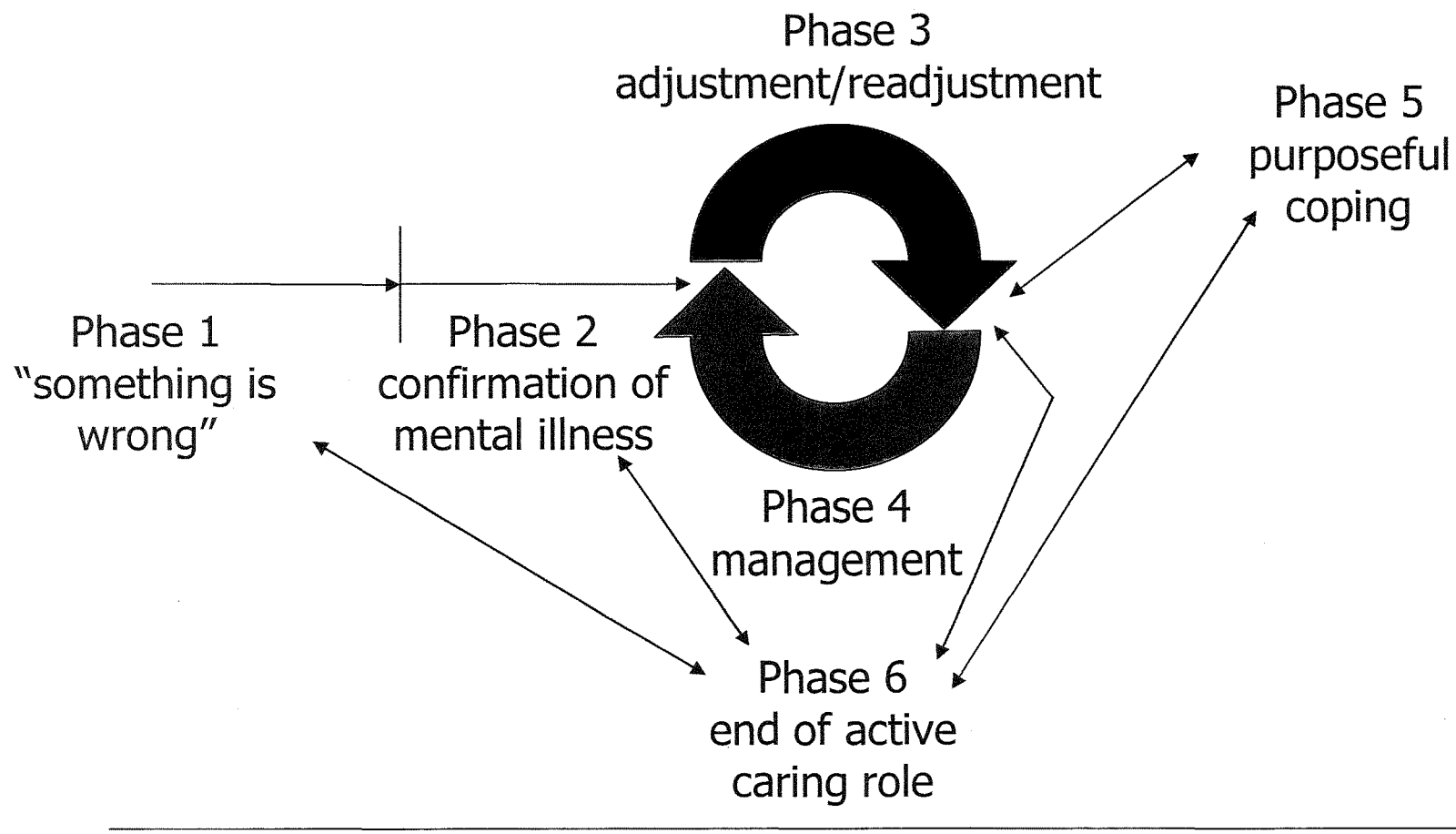
# Dimensions of Caring



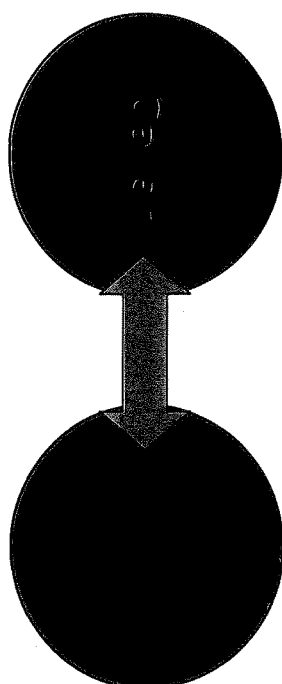
\*Carers may undertake more than one caring role/life-course during their life and/or may have multiple caring roles

\*\*Life Stage includes age-related and life events of the carer

# CARER LIFE COURSE FRAMEWORK

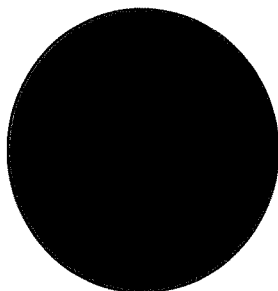


# Carer and care recipient

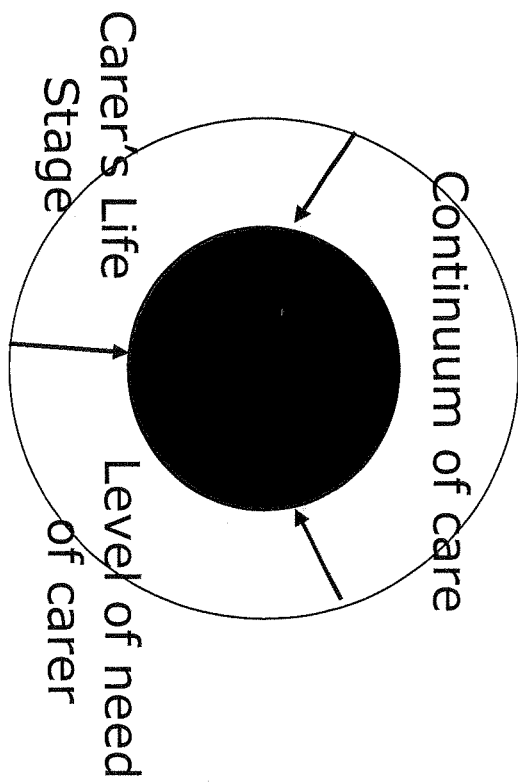


# Carer

Carers  
NSW



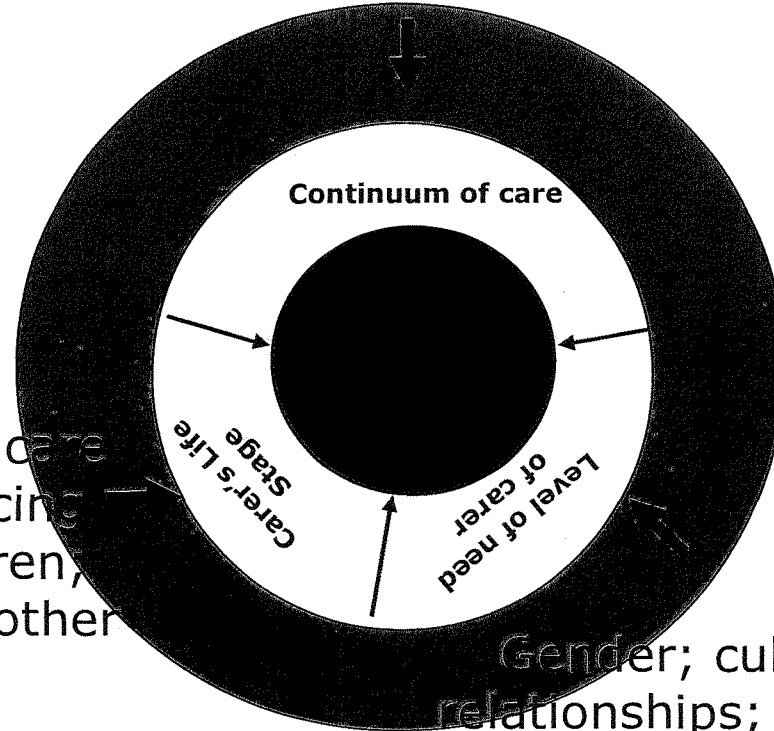
# Dimensions of caring impact on the carer



Influences on the 3 dimensions of caring

Position on the continuum; carers can be at different stages of the carer life course with different care recipients.

Age of carer and care recipient; balancing caring and children, relationship with other siblings....



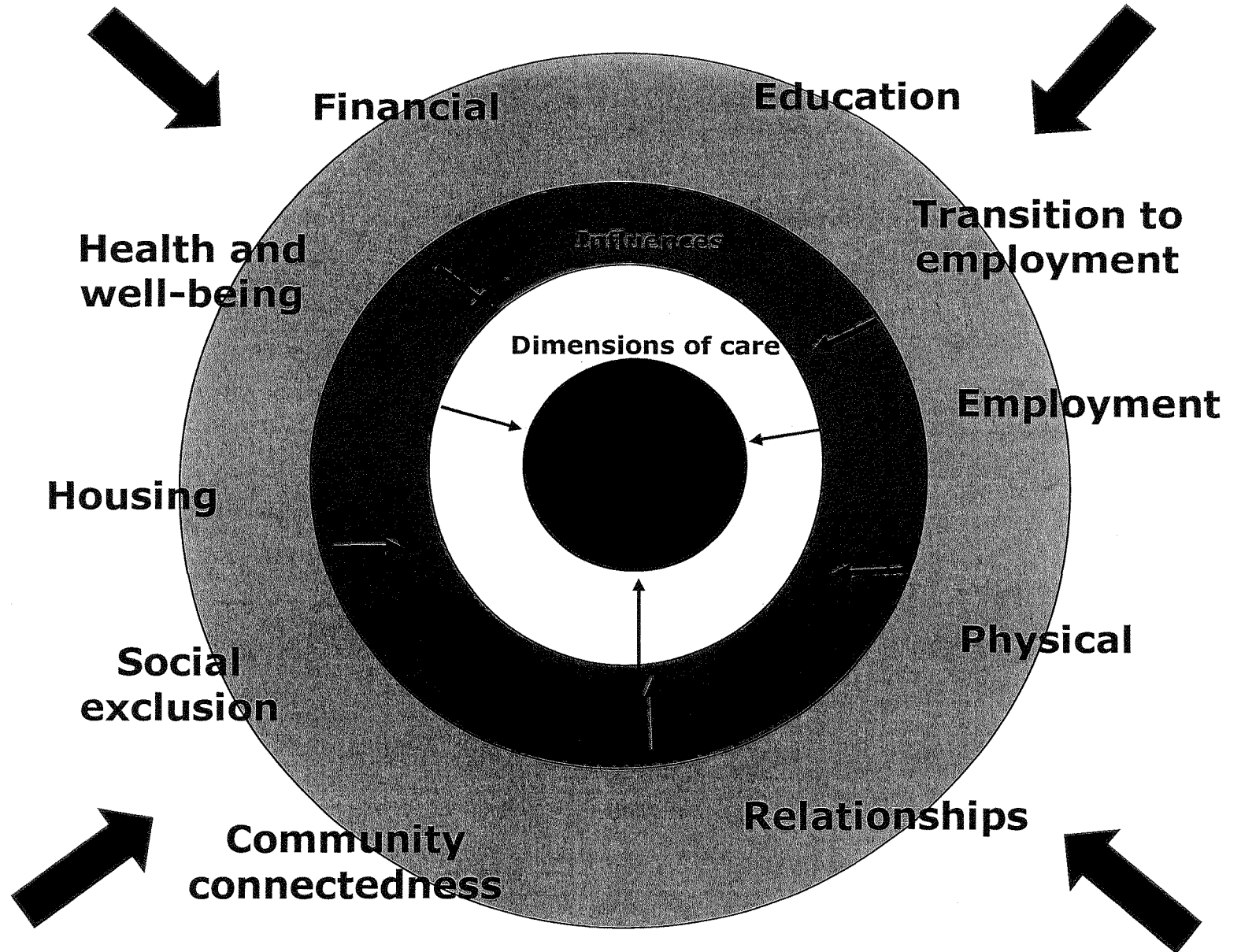
Gender; culture; family relationships; carer's health; employment; location; no. of care recipients; level of need of person being cared for....



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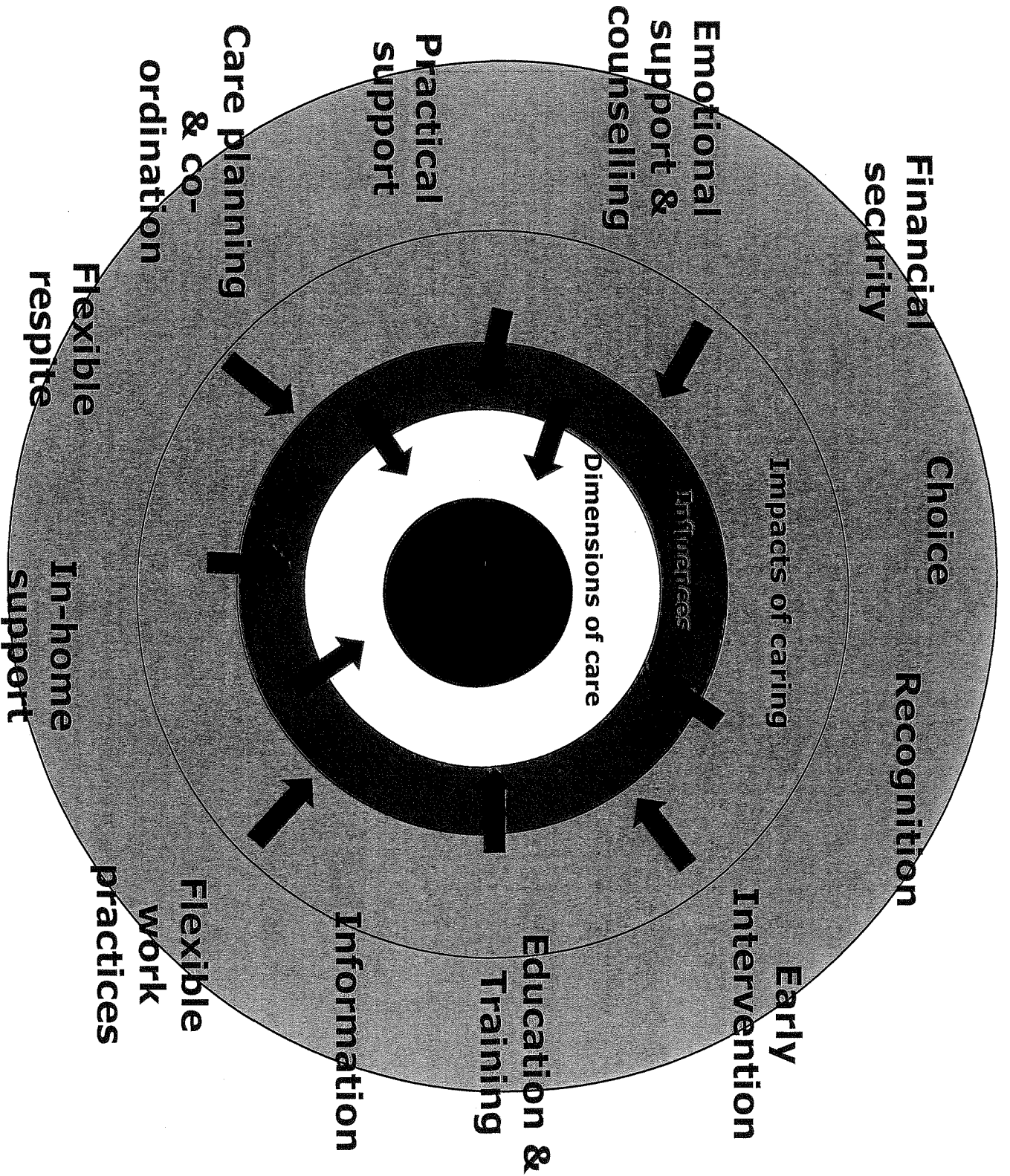


**Impacts of caring**

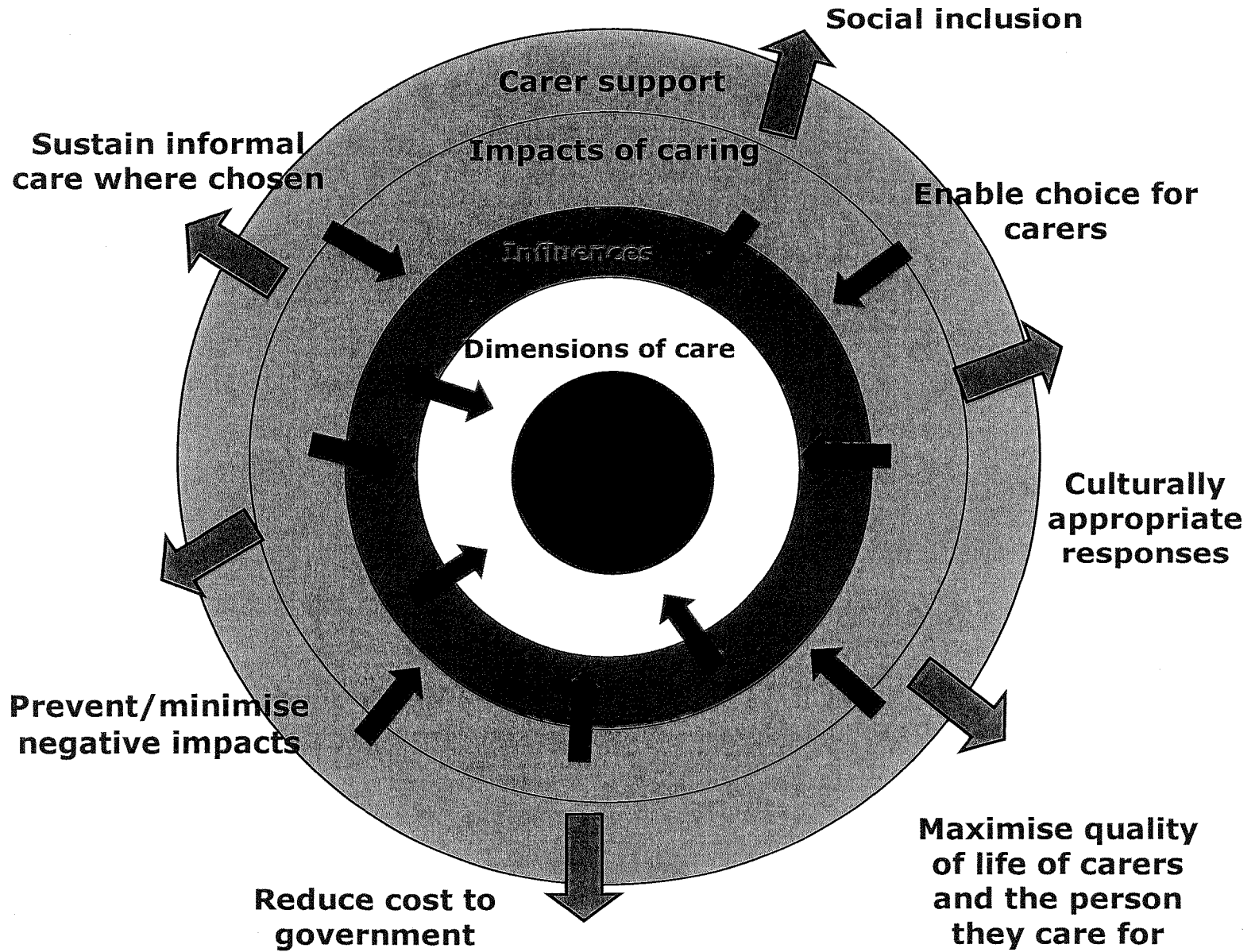




# Elements of carer support



**Outcomes of carer support**



- 1 Care recipient
- 2 Carer
- 3 Three dimensions of care
- 4 Factors which influence the three dimensions of care
- 5 The impacts of caring on the carer
- 6 Elements of carer support
- 7 Outcomes of carer support

