



## Speaking from Experience Families & Chronic Illness

### Transcript for chapter 2 of 8: Helping out

**Tianna (age 14, cared for grandmother):** I always, when mum has to look after my other brothers and sisters, I stay with Nan so that helps my mum get some rest and stuff.

**Lisa (age 14, cared for grandmother):** My little sister, I had to keep an eye on her because my mum was at work and my older sister had to go to school. I had to really look after her.

**Jandarmarra (age 11, cared for grandmother):** Like, if she wants me to clean up for her, I'll clean up and help her. With the clothes, because she always tells me to put them... When she folds up the clothes she tells me to put the clothes in my cupboard. And I get the clothes when it starts to rain when the clothes are dry. Me and my uncle Barry, we start to get the clothes off the line. We did that yesterday as well.

**Jessica and Alister (age 17 and 18, respectively, both cared for grandfather):** Every night he would wake up...

**Jessica and Alister:** ...at twelve o'clock or something.

**Jessica and Alister:** ...just feeling uncomfortable, so we would have to help him move. And his tablets - we had to watch the time and stuff because he had certain times he had to have his tablets.

**Lisa:** I had to help her with the dialysis machine, which was for her... her kidney failure.

**Jessica and Alister:** I used to just sit there and watch him and then just get him up for when his tablets are due. And yeah, just make sure he's right and comfortable in bed, he's okay and that.

**Jessica and Alister:** We would always swap and take turns so one night I'll go in there and the next night she will, and then my Nan and my aunty.

**Jandarmarra:** She sings out my name and that's when I go get her tablets and she wants a drink of water with it.

**Tianna:** I help her to get to the bathroom. Also, make her cups of tea, get her drinks, put her into bed, turn the TV on for her, and put the air-conditioner on - just in case it's cold or hot.

**Lisa:** Sometimes on the toilet, because she couldn't hardly do it herself. We had to just help her on there and help her off.

**Aaron (age 17, cared for grandparents):** They used to pee the bed and stuff, so I had to change their beds, had to mop up the floors, had to put them in the shower, change them, dress them. My pop had to wear nappies, like the grown-up nappies. So we had to put the nappies on them and stuff. I had to cook them meals. My Nan, because of her sugar, we had to not put too much sugar in her tea and not put salt on her food and stuff.

**Jandarmarra:** And when my sister wants me to do something, like this morning she asked me can I get her bag and all that, and I did. And get her a towel when she was in the shower. I gave it to her in the shower. And once I made my sister dinner.

**Jessica and Alister:** The boys used to help him have baths and get dressed and stuff. And my aunty, me, my Nan... my aunties would come down to our house and they would help too. So the girls would help with his medication and sit there with him and the boys would sit there and help him move if he needed to get comfortable and stuff.



**Shiralee (age 22, cared for father):** He was bed-ridden. And it had a big impact on my life because I was the only girl. And just trying to work around with him and all the other kids' sports and everything and trying to go to school and mum going to work.

**Aaron:** It would be like an hour in the morning, or like a half hour, and just trying to cook them... make them lunch or something... not even half an hour. And just making them feeds and stuff, or showering them, making their beds, vacuuming, like cleaning their room for them. Freshening it up for them.

**Jandarmarra:** I do all my things what my Nan wants me to do, what she asks me to do first. And then that's when I go out and play.

**Simon (age 18, Shiralee's brother):** I just kept a smile on his face really. Tried to make him laugh - the best times were the funniest times, so I tried to do that.

**Jessica and Alister:** He used to do anything for us so at the time we would do anything for him.