

Helpful Tips for Carers

- Learn as much as possible about your relative/friend's illness or disability, and the type of assistance and care required. Attending information sessions can be very helpful.
- Share the care with family and friends, and accept community services.
- Look after your own wellbeing, physically, mentally and emotionally. Ensure you have regular medical checks.
- Medication bag is available from the Pink Ladies Shop
- Be prepared to be persistent when seeking support and services. There are services available but often there are waiting lists.
- Plan for the future.

If the person you care for needs to go to hospital ensure you take with you

- Their medical information (the 'My Health Record' red book is a handy way to keep information together).
- All current medications and prescriptions
- Any other medical test results, x-rays or scans that may be useful



Available to purchase at the Pink Ladies Shop

While in hospital, use this checklist to ensure you ask for the information you need

- What is the diagnosis, treatment and likely prognosis of the person's illness?
- Who will be involved in ongoing treatment and care (eg. Specialists)?
- What is the expected date of discharge from hospital, and will transport be provided?
- Ensure you receive a Discharge Summary and scripts for medications.
- Discuss with the occupational therapist or social worker if equipment and/or home modifications are needed.
- What support services are available in the community?
- Who do I contact for follow-up advice and support? You may contact Carer Support if you are uncertain.

Some other tips

- Ensure all medication, prescriptions etc are kept together.
- Ensure your GP knows about all the specialists involved in their treatment and care. Try to see the same GP each time you visit the doctor.
- Look for the brochure on Home & Community Care (HACC) services. It provides valuable contacts for local residents in the Northern Sydney region.

Resources

The following resources are provided by Carer Support throughout our hospitals and community health centres to assist Carers, they are also available from the *Resources* section of our website: www.nscarersupport.com.au

Delirium

This brochure explains the condition of Delirium, who is at risk, the symptoms, causes and how it is treated.

Who's Who of Hospital Staff

This brochure explains the roles of the different hospital staff that Carers and the person they care for may come across during a visit to hospital or outpatients' clinic.

HACC Brochures (Community Services)

Brochures for each region are available throughout our hospitals and on our website.

Advance Care Planning - Directives

If there is an Advance Care Directive it is important that this information is given clearly to hospital staff. For further information about Advance Care Planning/ Advance Care Directives, or to download the brochure *Advance Care Planning*, or the *Advance Care Directive*, visit our website or www.planningaheadtools.com.au

Privacy

Under the Privacy Act the person you care for will generally need to give permission for health staff to talk to you about their condition and care unless your family member has a cognitive impairment.

It is important that the hospital or health service has the right contact person recorded in the patient's file. Misunderstandings may be avoided if one agreed person, such as the Carer, is the contact person and he/she can pass on information to other family members as appropriate.

Communication and Care Cues Form

Please complete this form if your family member has dementia, intellectual disability or a mental illness.

Carers know their family member and strategies to keep them feeling safe and secure. We appreciate your information to help us care.

This form enables our hospital staff to recognise and provide care that meets the needs of the individual patients with memory and cognitive problems whilst they are in hospital.

Contact Information

Northern Sydney Carer Support Service
Phone 9462 9488
www.nscarersupport.com.au

Northern Sydney Local Health District Carer Support Service

CARERS

Information for family members,
partners and friends who are Carers

"providing support for someone who is frail aged, or has a longer term illness, mental illness or disability"



Considering Carers in Health

Phone 9462 9488

www.nscarersupport.com.au



Health
Northern Sydney
Local Health District

Who is a Carer?

A Carer is anyone who cares for and supports a family member, partner or friend who:

- Is frail aged
- Has a chronic illness
- Has a disability
- Suffers from a mental illness
- Requires palliative care

Carers can be of any age, care for someone of any age, and/or come from different cultural backgrounds.

Carers may assist with:

- Personal care
- Medical appointments and medications
- Mobility and transport
- Emotional support
- Advocacy

Caring can be rewarding but also stressful and tiring, and can affect a Carers mental, physical and emotional health. It is important for Carers to recognise their own health needs and wellbeing.



Considering Carers in Health

Who can help family members and friends who are carers?

There are many organisations that are funded by federal, state, local government, and other means, that provide a range of services. Finding these organisations can be complex and every family has different needs. Some key organisations that can assist you are listed below.

Carer Support Service Northern Sydney LHD
Phone: 9462 9488 (central office)

We are a small service, but will return your call as soon as we can.

Our service is part of NSW Health's Carers Program based in Northern Sydney Local Health District. We provide information, education and advice to assist Carers. We can help you navigate the Health, Community Health and Community care systems to find the right service/s to assist you in your caring role.

The Carer Support Service provides intensive Carer Support for complex care situations.

Our website provides information on services available: www.nscarersupport.com.au

The **Event Diary** link on our website provides a comprehensive range of information on local events, courses, seminars and support groups.

My Aged Care
www.myagedcare.gov.au Phone 1800 200 422
There are a wide range of services to support independent living in the community, but they can be difficult to locate.

My Aged Care provide information on many types of services from personal care, gardening, transport and domestic assistance. *Information is available in other languages other than English and is also available for Indigenous and vision impaired clients.*

Health Direct

Phone 1800 022 222

24 Hour access to medical advice.

Aged Care Assessment Teams (ACAT)

For assessment for Aged Care packages, residential respite or permanent residential placement call your local ACAT. ACAT are found in each public hospital. The Aged Care teams may also be able to provide further assistance and guidance.

Commonwealth Respite Centre

Phone: 1800 052 222

Provide information on respite options and can arrange respite care so that Carers can take a break from their caring role.

Carers Australia – NSW

www.carersnsw.asn.au/ Freecall 1800 242 636

Provides a range of information and can provide counselling.

Centrelink

Phone 13 27 17

For more information about

- Carer payment & carer allowance
- Financial advice and information on concessions
- Disability pensions
- Rent assistance for those with a disability and their carers
- Asset tests for people going into residential aged care

Carers of People with Disability

ADHC Intake line Phone 9407 1650

Contact the Office Ageing Disability & Home Care (ADHC) intake and referral line for case management, access to respite, or other programs of support.

Carers of People with Dementia

The **National Dementia Helpline** is 1800 100 500. The **Dementia Challenging Behaviour Helpline** is available 24/7 1800 699 799. Dementia information packs are available in our hospitals or contact Carer Support on 9462 9488.

Mental Health Helpline

Phone: 1800 011 511

For assistance and information for Carers of people with a mental illness. This helpline also provides assistance for those caring for a person who has dementia and challenging behaviour.

Continence Helpline

Phone: 1800 330 066

For access to continence aids, and information on continence management.

Lifeline

Phone: 13 11 14

For 24 hour telephone counselling support

Interpreters

Interpreters are available and you have the right to use one. If you are in hospital ask the staff to arrange an interpreter for you. If you need to talk to a Community Health Centre or Community Service Provider, call the Telephone Interpreting Service on 13 14 50.

Locating Community Services

We are experiencing considerable changes in the community services. Keep up to date on community services via our internet site on www.nscarersupport.com.au