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.

Who can help carers?
There are many organisations that provide a range of services. Finding these organisations can be complex as every family has different needs. Some organisations that may assist you are listed below.

**Carer Support Service Northern Sydney LHD**
Phone: 9462 9488 (central office)
[www.facebook.com/NSLHDcarersupport](http://www.facebook.com/NSLHDcarersupport)
We provide information, education and advice to assist Carers and help you navigate the health care systems to find the right service/s to assist you. The Carer Support Service provides intensive Carer Support for complex care situations.

**NDIS**
Phone: 1800 800 110
For people under 65 who have a disability to access funding for support and care services.

**NDIA Quality & Safeguards Commission**
1800 035 544
Services or supports that were not provided in a safe, respectful way or to an appropriate standard.

**My Aged Care (Over 65 years of age)**
Phone: 1800 200 422
[www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au)
Community services or subsidised Care Packages for people over 65 to stay at home or enter residential care for short stay or permanent care.
*Information is available in other languages as well as for Indigenous and vision impaired clients.*

**REACH – a Call for Medical Response**
Is your family member in hospital? Are you worried about a deterioration in their current medical condition?
Our hospitals respond to requests from family members for a “Clinical Review”.

**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 and time out.
• Be prepared to be persistent when seeking support and services. There are services available but often there are waiting lists.
• Plan for the future.
Ask the nurse to help you make a REACH call or if there is a phone by the patients bedside you can dial 9 for the hospital switchboard who will direct your call.

At home call 000 for an ambulance.

**National Carers Gateway**  
Phone: 1800 422 737  
Information centre for Carers Australia-wide.

**Health Care Complaints Commission**  
1800 043 159  
Concerns about the quality of the health care provided particularly serious incidents.

**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  
- Assessment for people over 65 accessing subsidised care at home packages or residential care.

**Elder Abuse Hotline & Resource Unit**  
A free service that provides information, support and referrals relating to the abuse of older people.  
Phone: 1800 628 221  

**Carers of People with Dementia**  
**National Dementia Helpline:** 1800 100 500  
**Dementia Challenging Behaviour Helpline:** 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.

**Resources**  
The following resources are provided to assist Carers and are also available on our website [www.nscarersupport.com.au](http://www.nscarersupport.com.au)

**Dellrium**  
Explains the condition of delirium, who is at risk, the symptoms, causes and how it is treated.

**Who's Who of Hospital Staff**  
Explains the roles of hospital staff that Carers and the person they care for may encounter.

**Advance Care Planning - Directives**  
If you have an Advanced Care Directive it is important you give this information to hospital staff.  
For further information about Advanced Care Planning and Advance Care Directives, or to download the brochures, please visit our website or [www.planningaheadtools.com.au](http://www.planningaheadtools.com.au)

**Communication and Care Cues form**  
If your family member has dementia, intellectual disability or a mental illness. Tell us your strategies to keep them feeling safe and secure.

Information helps our hospital staff provide individualised care to patients with memory and cognitive problems while they are in hospital.

**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 can be avoided if the Carer identifies and is the point of contact for the hospital. The Carer (husband/wife/daughter/son of the patient) then relays information to other family members.

**Interpreters 13 14 50**  
Ask staff to arrange an Interpreter for you if required in either the Community Health Centres or in Hospital.