

Who's who of hospital staff

Considering Carers in Health

Phone 9462 9488

 www.nscarersupport.com.au

 www.facebook.com/NSLHDCarersupport



Information for family members, partners and friends who are carers

Carers may interact with a variety of staff in hospitals and clinics...

Each of these staff performs specific roles and provides particular information relating to a patient's care. It can be easy to lose track of the different staff involved in the care of your family member or friend, and of who said what. This resource explains who these staff members are and their roles.

A **family conference** will bring all these staff together to inform you about the care of the patient. The nurse-in-charge, social worker or doctor can arrange a family conference for you.

Medical Staff

Staff Specialist or Visiting Medical Officer (VMO)/ Consultant

Patients are admitted to hospital under the care of the most appropriate Specialist. The Staff Specialist develops a treatment plan for the more junior doctors, who carry out the day-to-day work based on this plan. The Specialist will usually be on the ward only when conducting a round. To talk to the specialist ask the junior doctors to arrange the call or meeting (a patient's permission is required unless covered by guardianship).

Registrar

Doctors training to become Specialists are called Registrars. They oversee the day-to-day care of the patient and, in consultation with the Staff Specialist, and other staff, make decisions regarding the medical management of patients.

Registrars are in the hospital most of the time; they are usually the most accessible person to get a medical update from. Registrars change areas every 3-6 months so you may deal with different Registrars over a period of time.

Residents and Interns

Interns are doctors in their first year following completion of their university degree.

Residents have had at least one year working in a hospital. They can give you some information but they have limited authority. As part of their training they rotate areas every 3 months.

Nursing Staff

Management of each ward is under the direction of a **Nurse-in-Charge**. If you have difficulties or queries that the ward nurses are not able to assist you with, or concerns you wish to raise, you can ask to speak to the ward's **Nurse-in-Charge**.

In hospital wards, most nurses will be either a **Registered Nurse (RN)** who has completed a university degree, or an **Enrolled Nurse (EN)** who has completed a certificate course.

Clinical Nurse Educators (CNEs) work alongside nurses to give them additional education and support.

Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) or **Clinical Nurse Consultants (CNC)** specialise in a particular area, e.g. Intensive Care, Aged Care or Cancer Care. They have extensive specialist knowledge and experience.

Falls Prevention: Please speak to the Nurse-In-Charge or RN if your relative is confused. They will decide on appropriate measures to keep the patient safe and will talk to you about those measures. Please read the Falls & Delirium brochures available in the ward.



Health
Northern Sydney
Local Health District

Other Health Staff

Patient Representative

If you are concerned, have a complaint or wish to feed back your appreciation to our Health Service contact the Patient Representative, either whilst accessing our hospitals or after discharge. It is preferable that concerns be addressed immediately. Patient Representatives are available Monday to Friday at each hospital. Ask the Information Desk for assistance.

Chaplains

Chaplains are available to support people in times of crisis, anxiety, suffering, grief, loss and death. Staff will arrange a chaplain for you.

Interpreters

Interpreters are available in our Hospitals. Ask staff if an Interpreter is required.

Allied Health Staff

Social Workers provide support, counselling and information to patients and their families. They may also assist with information or arrange community services.

Occupational Therapist (OT) role is to see where an illness or disability may prevent a person from being able to perform daily living tasks (eg taking a shower). An OT's job is to teach a person how to manage tasks again so that they can be independent and safe. OTs may also arrange for home modifications or equipment.

Physiotherapist (Physio) sees a patient after surgery, or if they have a longer term illness or disability, to help address mobility issues. They also educate people to understand the importance of exercise and to increase mobility and strength. Physios assess a patient's need for mobility aids and organise follow-up appointments with the post-discharge clinics.

Speech Pathologists assess, treat and provide a management plan for patients with communication disorders. Surgery, disease or brain injury may cause physical problems, i.e. eating or swallowing.

Dietitians ensure that patients receive the correct diet and nutrition. Ask to speak to the dietician if you have any concerns. Dietitians work closely with Speech Pathologists for patients who have swallowing difficulties and it is important for carers to be involved too. If you are concerned that your relative is not eating, please speak with the Dietitian or RN.

Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT)

Older patients who need residential care, respite care or community care packages are assessed by ACAT who determines their eligibility, level of care required and advise the patient and family of options. Consent to aged residential placement is always discussed with the patient and their family/carers.

Pharmacists

Pharmacists review medications and work closely with doctors prescribing medications. It is important that you advise them of all medications and supplements being taken.

The Red Book can help keep information up-to-date. Ask Staff for further information, a medication bag can be purchased through the Pink Ladies in the foyer shops at each Hospital.

Carer Support NSLHD

Ph: 9462 9488

www.nscarersupport.com.au

Providing information, education, advice and guidance to carers in our hospitals and in the community.

Our website provides information for carers www.nscarersupport.com.au

The Event diary provides information on education sessions in the region, covering a range of topics, and other events for carers.

Connect with Carer Support NSLHD on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/NSLHDcarersupport



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".

Ask the nurse to help you make a REACH call or if there is a phone by the bedside you may call 9 for our switchboard who will direct your call.

At home call 000 for an ambulance.