

Northern Sydney Local Health District
Carer Support Service

CARERS

Information for family members,
partners and friends who are Carers

Considering Carers in Health

Phone 9462 9488

 www.nscarersupport.com.au

 www.facebook.com/NSLHDcarersupport



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 or other longer term 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
- Financial management

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.

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.



Interpreters 13 14 50

Ask staff to arrange an Interpreter for you if required in either the Community Health Centres or in hospital.

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

Ph: 9462 9488 (central office)

www.facebook.com/NSLHDcarersupport

www.nscarersupport.com.au

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

Ph: 1800 800 110 www.ndis.gov.au

For people under 65 who have a disability to access funding for support and care services.

My Aged Care (Over 65 years of age)

Ph: 1800 200 422 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.

National Carers Gateway Ph: 1800 422 737

A national call centre linking Carers to information and also provides access for carers to emergency respite. Carers may also undergo assessment to access telephone, internet or face to face counselling services.

Centrelink Ph: 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.



Health
Northern Sydney
Local Health District

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

Ph: 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

Ph: 1800 330 066

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

Lifeline

Ph: 13 11 14

For 24-hour telephone counselling support.

Elder Abuse Hotline & Resource Unit

Ph: 1800 628 221

www.elderabusehelpline.com.au

A free service that provides information, support and referrals relating to the abuse of older people.

Health Care Complaints Commission

Ph: 1800 043 159

Concerns about the quality of the health care provided particularly serious incidents.

NDIA Quality & Safeguards Commission

Ph: 1800 035 544

Services or supports that were not provided in a safe, respectful way or to an appropriate standard.

Hospital 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 (e.g. Specialists)?
- What is the expected date of discharge from hospital, and will transport be provided?

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 patients bedside you can dial 9 for the hospital switchboard who will direct your call.

At home call 000 for an ambulance.

- 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.

Take these with you

- All current medications and prescriptions – clearly labelled.
- Any other medical test results, x-rays or scans that may be useful.

Some other tips

- Ensure all medications, prescriptions and any vitamins or complimentary medicines are kept together and clearly labelled.
- Ensure your GP is aware of all the specialists involved in the person's treatment and care. Try to see the same GP each time you visit the doctor.

Resources

The following resources are provided to assist Carers and are also available on our website www.nscarersupport.com.au

Delirium

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

Communication and Care Cues form

If your family member has dementia, intellectual disability or a neurological condition affecting their cognition. 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.