

SOUTH EASTERN SYDNEY ILLAWARRA NSW HEALTH

Information for Carers
People Who Look After Others
Support and Services to Assist You

Are you a carer?

Do you care for someone with a disability, mental illness, chronic condition or who is frail aged?

Are you a family member, partner, friend or a neighbour that offers this care?

Do you assist them with any of these activities eg personal care, mobility, transport, emotional support, communication or their meals and housework?

If you answered YES to these questions – then you are a CARER

Caring can be a rewarding experience, but may make many demands on you. Caring for someone can affect you – mentally, physically and emotionally. Looking after your own health and well being is essential.

Who Can help you?

Working out where to get help can be a daunting task. Three key services can help you get started and provide you with the information, support and links to local services to assist you and the person you are caring for:

Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre **Ph: 1800 059 059 (local office) (24 hr emergency carer support)**

- ❖ Provides information and advice on respite options and support for carers in your local area
- ❖ Organises respite for short term planned or emergency situations including booking residential respite
- ❖ Emergency carer support can be accessed 24 hours a day 7 days a week in times of carer crisis for a short period of time depending on situation and need

Commonwealth Carer Resource Centre **Ph: 1800 242 636**

- ❖ Provides information, referral and advice about carer support and services across NSW including government assistance available.
- ❖ Provides a free Carer Support Kit
- ❖ Provides emotional support, and counselling through the National Carer Counselling Program

Commonwealth Carelink Centre
Ph: 1800 052 222 (local office)

- ❖ Provides information about local services that assist older people, people with a disability and carers to continue to live independently.
For example:
 - Meal Services
 - Home Maintenance
 - Aids and equipment
 - Domestic assistance
 - Personal Care
 - Aged care homes
 - Transport

Further information on carer support for people from diverse cultural backgrounds can be obtained from:

Multicultural Health

Illawarra Ph: 4274 6233
South Eastern Sydney Ph: 9382 3309

For information on your options if you are dissatisfied or have concerns about any health service contact:

Health Care Complaints Commission Ph: 9219 7444
Freecall 1800 043 159
Illawarra Ph: 4222 5556
South Eastern Sydney Ph: 9382 8129

Helpful Tips for Positive Caring

- ❖ Learn as much as possible about your relatives or friends illness or disability and the type of assistance available to you and the person you care for
 - ❖ Share the care with family, friends and community services
 - ❖ Look after yourself physically, mentally and emotionally
 - ❖ Be prepared to be persistent when seeking support and services. There are services available but there are likely to be waiting lists
 - ❖ Plan for the future
- (source: Carers NSW Fact Sheet)

If the person you are caring for is in hospital or receiving assistance from a community health service 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
- ❖ What medications do they need to take?
- ❖ Are there follow up appointments?
- ❖ What ongoing care is required?
- ❖ Who will be involved in ongoing treatment and care?
- ❖ What is the expected date of discharge from hospital and will transport be provided?
- ❖ Are home modifications and equipment needed?
- ❖ What support services are available in the community?
- ❖ Who do I contact for follow up advice and support?

If the person you care for needs to go to hospital do you have the following information to assist health care staff?

- ❖ Medical history
- ❖ Current list of medications
- ❖ Recent test results eg XRays, CT scans

Privacy

Under the Privacy Act the person you care for will generally need to give permission for health service staff to talk to you about their condition and care.

It is important that the hospital or health service has the right contact person recorded in the patients file. Misunderstandings may be avoided if one agreed person is the contact person and can pass on information to family as appropriate.

Do you need an interpreter

Interpreters are available in Public hospitals and community Healthy Centres free of charge. If you need an interpreter call the Health Care Interpreter Service on:

Illawarra	Ph: 4274 4211
South Eastern Sydney	Ph: 9515 9500

Produced by: Carer Support service (SESIHS)

For enquiries/comments about carer issues or services within health services please contact a Carer Support Coordinator:
Illawarra Ph. 4253 4501 or 4295 2302, Shoalhaven Ph. 4423 9701, South Eastern Sydney Ph. 9947 9854

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