



The Carer Advocates

The Carer Advocates work part-time and provide carers of people with a mental illness with:

Information

The provision of information about mental illness, services and the mental health system is essential to ensure that carers' needs are met and to assist them to better care for their friend or relative.

Education

An important aspect of the Carer Advocate's role is to provide education to empower carers so that their needs can be met.

This is on a one to one basis or through our educational programs such as Assisting Families which can be delivered in single modules or as a 4 to 8 week program.

Advocacy

Where appropriate, they advocate on behalf of carers to ensure that the carers have access to information and services that they require.

Support

The Carer Advocates provide emotional support both over the telephone and face to face.

If you are a carer or service provider in the Southern NSW & Murrumbidgee LHDs, please contact the appropriate Carer Advocate at the offices listed below:

Murrumbidgee Local Health District

Albury Office

Ph: (02) 6021 5882

Email: infogs@carerassist.org.au

Wagga Wagga Office

Ph: (02) 6925 9399

Griffith Office

Ph: (02) 6962 3099

Southern NSW Local Health District

Cooma Office

Ph: (02) 6452 4075

Moruya Office

Ph: (02) 4474 0900

Goulburn Office

Ph: (02) 4822 3173

For information and advice you may also call Carer Assist direct between 9 am and 5 pm on (02) 9816 5652

or in the case of an emergency, please call Lifeline (24 hours) on 13 11 14

For an interpreter call 13 14 50 (Translating and Interpreting Services)



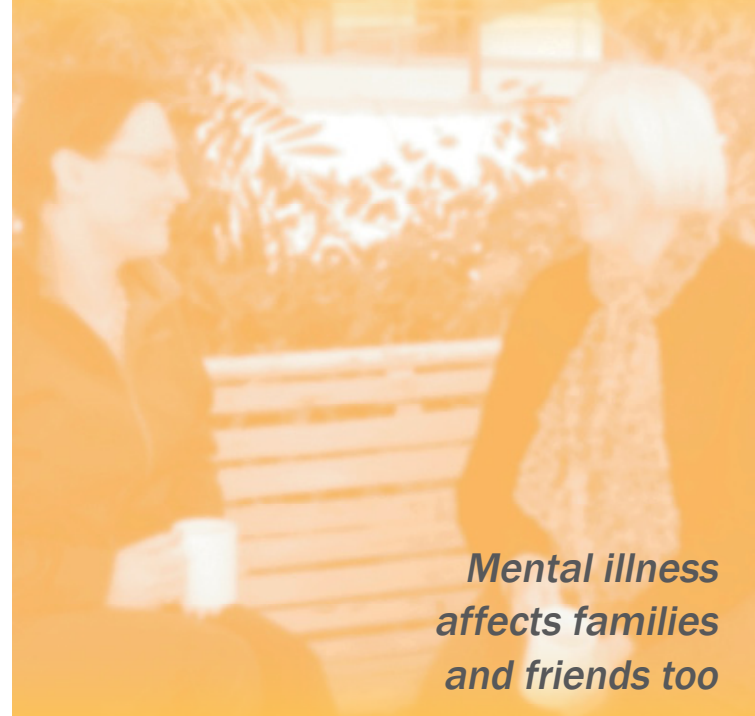
Carer Assist is a service of the Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW Inc.



Carer Assist
Locked Mail Bag 5014
Gladesville NSW 1675
Phone: (02) 9816 5652
Fax: (02) 9879 2699
Email: info@carerassist.org.au
Website: www.carerassist.org.au



Are you close to someone with a mental illness?



Mental illness affects families and friends too

Carer Assist helps families and friends by providing emotional support, information education and advocacy



Understanding through experience



Why Carer Assist?

We can help families and friends by:

- Helping to find diagnostic and treatment services.
- Providing information and support to cope with the grief of diagnosis.
- Providing assistance in building support systems.
- Providing information and education on how to live with someone who has a mental illness.
- Providing information and education on how to set boundaries.
- Providing information and education on caring for yourself.
- Providing or sourcing extra support in times of crisis.
- Assisting with navigation of the mental health system.
- Assisting with advocacy when their requirements or those of the person they are caring for are not met or are not being appropriately met.



Who are Carers?

A carer is someone who looks after a friend or relative with a disability, mental illness, chronic illness or who is frail aged.

A carer can come from any walk of life, cultural background and age group.

A carer may have to care for someone 24 hours a day, seven days a week which is often emotionally, physically and financially draining.

Carers' needs are often neglected resulting in added stress hindering their ability to cope.

Some facts:

- Mental Illness affects one in every five Australians
- 62% of people with mental illness receive no assistance at all or depend on informal support from carers and families
- Australia has 2.5 million carers, 750,000 of whom live in NSW



What does Carer Assist do?

Carer Assist has Carer Advocates who provide individual support services and education and training for carers and families of someone with a mental illness within the boundaries of five Local Health Districts:

Sydney LHD

Office currently located in Bankstown

South Western Sydney LHD

Offices currently located in Campbelltown and Moss Vale

Hunter New England LHD

Offices currently located in Newcastle, Tamworth, Armidale, Taree and Inverell

Murrumbidgee LHD

Offices currently located in Albury, Wagga Wagga and Griffith

Southern NSW LHD

Offices currently located in Cooma, Moruya and Goulburn

The Carer Advocates work together with other non-government organisations, Local Health Districts, community health organisations and any other organisations or groups that are involved in a carer's life.