

NSW Carers Strategy 2014-2019 Fact Sheet

Introduction

The NSW Carers Strategy is a five year plan to improve the position of carers in NSW. The Strategy is being implemented by government, non-government organisations and private businesses in new partnerships designed to deliver better services and support for carers.

A carer provides ongoing, unpaid support to a family member, neighbour or friend who needs help because of disability, terminal illness, chronic illness, mental illness and/or ageing.

Background

Most people will be likely to either provide care to a family member or friend, or to need care themselves relating to health and activities of daily living. The work that unpaid carers do is essential to the wellbeing of our society and economy. However, research shows that carers have much lower levels of health and wellbeing than other demographic groups.

NSW Carers Strategy

The NSW Carers Strategy builds on what the NSW Government is doing to raise awareness and recognition of the challenges carers face. It complements reforms in other areas such as disability, mental health, and ageing and provides a broader context for ongoing implementation of the *NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*. Projects under the Strategy are in five focus areas and seek to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Employment and Education
 - Carers have choices and opportunities to participate in paid work.
 - Young carers complete school and transition to further education and employment.
2. Carer health and wellbeing
 - Carers experience good health and wellbeing.
3. Information and community awareness
 - Carers are able to easily access information when they need it.
 - Carers feel the broader community understands their experience.
4. Carer Engagement
 - Carers are involved in decisions that affect them and the people they care for.
5. Improving the evidence base
 - Carers policy and practice is informed by quality evidence.

There are a number of things that Health staff can do to reflect the Strategy:

- At any one time approximately 11% of the workforce will be faced with the challenges of working and caring for a family member or friend at home. NSW Health, including Local Health Districts, must ensure that management strategies and systems continue to support employees and colleagues who are carers.
- Staff should consider carers health and wellbeing and encourage them to access the supports and services that they need.
- Staff should, be aware that support and education services are available for carers, and provide information to carers whenever it is appropriate to do so.
- Staff and managers should engage with carers as partners in care to improve outcomes for clients and to inform decisions about policy and services that affect carers and the people they care for.

Link to NSW Carers Strategy:

http://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/file/0017/300077/NSW_Carers_Strategy_2014-19.pdf

Link to additional information on carers and NSW Health initiatives:

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/carers/Pages/Resources.aspx>