

Who are carers?

You are a carer if you provide ongoing help to someone who needs it because of their:

- disability
- long term or life-limiting illness
- mental illness
- dementia
- ageing.

The definition of a carer used here comes from the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* (NSW)*.

A carer may receive a Centrelink payment such as Carers Allowance but is not paid for the care they provide.

Many of the approximately 850,000 carers in NSW find the caring role to be rewarding and satisfying however many also sacrifice a great deal financially, socially, emotionally and physically.

Carers are all different - they come from all cultural backgrounds, can be any age, male or female. Carers can be family members, friends, housemates or neighbours. A person is not a carer just because they live with or are related to the person who needs care. Many people who are caring for someone do not realise they are a carer.

A person is not considered to be a carer if:

- they care for a child who does not have a disability or chronic illness
- they care for someone who needs help because they have a short term condition or illness (e.g. a broken leg)
- they care for someone as a formal volunteer, paid employee or as part of education or training.

Other fact sheets in this series

- Guide to the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010
- Guide for public sector staff
- Guide for public sector managers

More information and resources

NSW Health

Web: www.health.nsw.gov.au/carers

Email: Carers@moh.health.nsw.gov.au

NSW Health Carers Program Carer Support Officer contacted through your Local Health District

Department of Family and Community Services

Web: www.facs.nsw.gov.au | **Email:** nswcarersact@facs.nsw.gov.au

* NOTE: Broader definitions of a carer can be found in industrial awards, other legislation and internal human resources policies.