

# Sunnyhaven Participant Handbook



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## Welcome to Sunnyhaven

At Sunnyhaven, we strive to deliver quality services to those in the community who are living with disability. This handbook includes what our participants can expect from us to ensure that the service we provide is in line with National Disability Standards and meets individual ambitions, needs and circumstances.

Sunnyhaven's framework for providing services to people with disability is to acknowledge the strengths and gifts that people bring with them. We don't look at "what is wrong" we focus on the strengths which can ultimately support the aspirations and dreams of the people we work with. Our team works holistically with families to ensure that Person Centred Plans empower our participant's to have control in their lives and get the support they require.



## Our Story

Sunnyhaven has a rich and motivating history of families coming together to best meet the needs of their children. Since 1951 Sunnyhaven's history has had a dynamic journey of the struggle, love and perseverance for families wanting to find better options for their children that were not previously available in the area.

## The Making of Sunnyhaven

- 1951 Mr. Ted Lacy was attempting to find suitable care for his son who had a disability. As a result, he formed The St. George District Subnormal Children's Society with the aim of establishing an education facility for those with a disability.
- 1956 The land at Beach Street, Kogarah was made available by the Rockdale Municipal Council and the South Haven Special School was built and established by local families who wanted more inclusion for their children.
- 1970s Under the guidance of Mr. H.G. Marsden and Mr. J. Dineen, Sunnyhurst School was established. The families from these two schools came together to find solutions to

providing services once their children had finished school. Subsequently, South Haven and Sunnyhurst amalgamated and became known as St. George Intellectual Disability Service Ltd.

2007 To acknowledge the contributions by the dedicated families from South Haven and Sunnyhurst, our name was changed to Sunnyhaven Ltd.

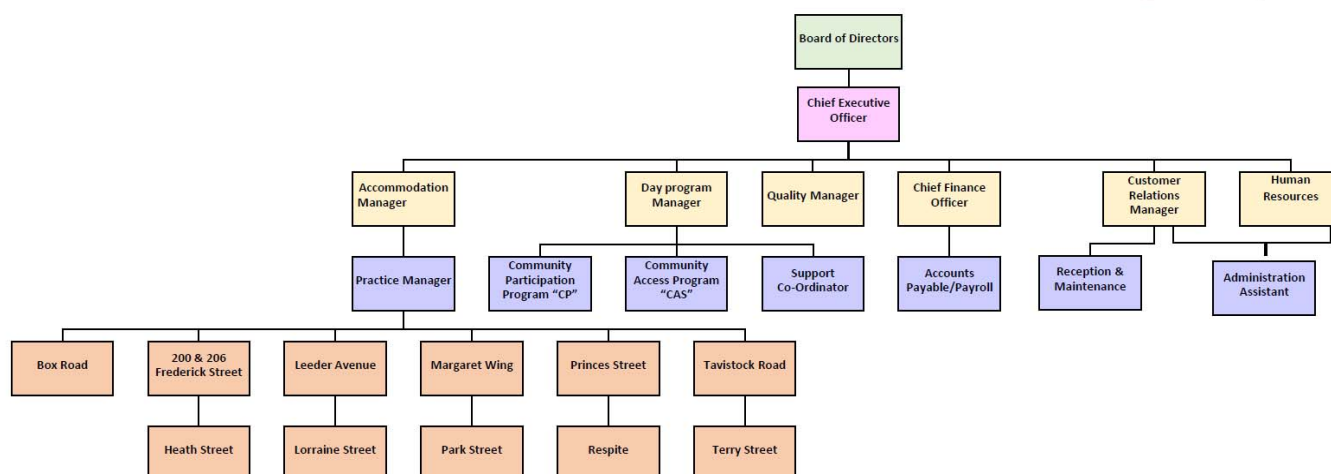
2014 Our name changed to Sunnyhaven Disability Services to reflect the service we provide.

## Sunnyhaven Today

Sunnyhaven now provides a variety of services and support to over 200 families in the St. George area

Sunnyhaven is governed by a Board of Directors, made up of professional people interested in the rights of people with a disability. The Board of Directors works with our management team to ensure the best possible service is delivered to our participant's.

**Sunnyhaven Organisational Chart**



## Purpose, Vision & Values

### Purpose

Sunnyhaven supports people to build their strengths, work toward their goals, develop meaningful relationships, and to aspire to new things.

### Vision

Our vision is that people with disability and their families feel included in their communities, and are recognised for their abilities and their cultures.

### Values

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Respect         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We encourage autonomy and celebrate people's talents.</li><li>• We support each other to do our best at all times.</li><li>• We are kind to people.</li></ul>  |
| Integrity       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We are honest, accountable and reliable.</li><li>• We care for others and for ourselves.</li><li>• We do what we say we will do.</li></ul>   |
| Originality     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We love that everyone is different.</li><li>• We are creative and seek to find joy in the things we do.</li><li>• We will make the NDIS fit you; not make you fit the NDIS.</li></ul>  |
| Professionalism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We are driven by our purpose, not profit.</li><li>• We take time to connect with people, and we listen to what you have to say</li><li>• We are responsible, and create safe spaces where you have what you need and more.</li></ul> |



## What can we offer participants?

At Sunnyhaven, we have a range of programs, activities, allied health, support coordination and independent supported living to support our participants.

### Community Connexions

Sunnyhaven provides opportunities for people with disability to develop the skills they need to increase their independence and participate as valued and active members of the community. Our programs are designed to match lifestyle choices and include arts & crafts, music therapy, computer skills and leisure & recreation.

Through this program, Sunnyhaven support participants to:

- stay in touch with family and friends and to meet new people
- be safe in the community, to go to work or find other meaningful things to do with their time, and to enjoy services and activities in their chosen community
- learn new skills or enhance the abilities they already have



### Supported Independent Living

Sunnyhaven provides supported accommodation in homes, which provide opportunities to live with others.

Our Supported Independent Living Service offers help or supervision of daily tasks to develop skills of a person to live as independently as possible



## Our homes

Our homes provide a welcoming atmosphere with supports tailored to meet individual needs.

Sunnyhaven owns the majority of our homes. As times go by we will be required to complete repairs and maintenance. Decisions on colour schemes and equipment choices will be sole responsibility of Sunnyhaven.



Areas of support include:

- engaging in the wider community
- encouraging and helping you to look after your health
- assisting you to be safe in the community, to go to work and to find meaningful things to do with your time
- providing personal care if you need it and help you learn how to look after yourself

## Short Term Accommodation

At Sunnyhaven, we appreciate that carers sometimes need a break. Sunnyhaven provides positive and meaningful experiences for the people with a disability, at the same time as giving carers a break from their usual care-giving role.



From time to time participants may require temporary support that are different from their usual living arrangements. Respite can provided planned short term care for participants.

## Support Coordination

The role of a Support Coordinator is to connect participants with an NDIS Plan to supports and Services in the community.

Come meet our team, we can work with you to understand your NDIS plan and achieve your goals





## Coffee Club

Coffee Club has been running for over ten years and is a much loved activity. Coffee Club is a social group where participants from all of our programs come every week to meet, socialise, relax and party with friends.

We have a performance stage for those wanting to sing along to their favourite songs and a projector to play music videos on. A light dinner and a drink are provided for the small fee of \$15.

Participants always have fun and it's a great way to make new friends.



## Participant Contribution

### Fees Supported Independent Living

Centrelink rent allowance

Lodging 75% of Centrelink pension

Transport 100% of **NDIS** transport allowance

## What can participants expect from us?

National Disability Standards ensure that disability service providers make participants the centre of the decision making process regarding the support they receive. Sunnyhaven ensures these standards are implemented in line with our key policy statements and incorporated in the services we provide, as outlined below.



## Standard 1 – Rights

"Each person receives a service that promotes and respects their legal and human rights and enables them to exercise choice like everyone else in the community"

To promote our participant's' rights, we ensure that each person is placed at the centre of decision making in all aspects of day-to-day life by:

- Ensuring each person has access to information of their legal and human rights
- Respecting individual interests and choices about how they wish to participate in the community
- Providing participant's with advocacy and support

### UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

Sunnyhaven is committed to the principles of respecting and protecting the legal and human rights of individuals according to the following Principles of the UN CRPD:

- Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons
- Non-discrimination
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- Equality of opportunity
- Accessibility
- Equality between men and women
- Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities
- To live independently and be included in the community
- Respect for privacy

### Privacy Statement

Sunnyhaven embraces that Privacy is a human right. Peoples Rights related to privacy are set out in the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 and State and Territory privacy laws. People with disability have a right to privacy including in relation to the collection, use and disclosure of information concerning them, and in the dignified way services are delivered to them.

Individuals have the right not to have personal information disclosed to others without their informed consent. Personal information is information or an opinion about a person whose identity can be determined from that of personal information include a person's name, address, date of birth and details about their health or disability.

Sunnyhaven will request a consent form when you first access our service and we will seek your consent once again at a review process. You can at this time change, amend or withdraw consent to pass on information to relevant stakeholders.

Regardless of a consent form we will endeavor to inform you about requests for information and seek your approval.

There are certain circumstances where Sunnyhaven may disclose information about a person without consent from the person involved. This might include mandatory reporting requirements on child protection matters, and obligations to report incidences of violence, exploitation, neglect and abuse, and sexual misconduct to the NDIS Commission and police.

The information we collect as part of a comprehensive planning process is kept in our internal data base called MYP. This data base allows us to upload information and give us a due date for renewal. Keeping accurate, up-to-date and legible records that report relevant details of a participant's service history, medication and support needs underpins our work with each participant.

We also have a personal file and a medication file which is a hard copy and is locked away for protection.

### *Advocacy and Support*

Sunnyhaven is committed to providing participants with advocacy and support when it is requested. Sunnyhaven supports the right of participant's to use an advocate of their choice to negotiate on their behalf. This may be in relation to assessments, reviews, complaints or any other communication between the Participant and Sunnyhaven. We will work co-operatively with any advocate nominated by a Participant and treat them with respect. There are many forms of advocacy:

Self-advocacy	is when you speak for yourself
Informal advocacy	is when you ask a friend or family member to speak up for you
Family advocacy	is when an advocate works with your family members, so that the family knows how best to help you
Citizen advocacy	is when an advocacy agency matches you with a volunteer. The volunteer gets to know you and finds out what you need.
Individual advocacy	is when an advocate works with a person to sort out bigger problems. These problems might be neglect, abuse or when your rights are not met. You can ask one of these advocacy agencies to help you, their services are free

For more information on the National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP), please visit the Department of Social Services website: [www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au)

*We support the involvement of advocates to assist with decision making and choices on your behalf. An advocate is a person you choose to speak for you. They make sure people listen to you. They might help you with talking or writing letters.*

## Standard 2 – Participation & Inclusion

“Each person is encouraged to and supported to contribute to social and civic life in their communities in the way they choose”

Sunnyhaven encourages each person with a disability to actively participate in and have a meaningful inclusion within their chosen community.

At Sunnyhaven, we:

- Promote opportunities for active and meaningful participation to minimise barriers to community participation
- Respect each person’s decisions on how they would like to be included in their community



## *Valued Status*

Sunnyhaven provides opportunities to each person receiving a service to develop and maintain skills and lifestyles that enable you to have valued roles in the community.

Sunnyhaven recognises and promotes the person's individual potentials, abilities, competencies and contributions. People who use the service are actively involved in the development and review of the service. Sunnyhaven staff are respectful of the diverse cultural, moral and religious beliefs of people in the service, and interpreters are also utilised when the need arises.

*Sunnyhaven believes our **participant's** are important and valuable members of the community, and we will do everything we can to help you.*

## **Standard 3 – Individual Outcomes**

"Each person is supported to exercise choice and control over the design and delivery of their supports and services"

Sunnyhaven promotes individual decision making and responsive services to people with disability. Person centred approaches are fundamental to this standard where individuals make decisions to achieve their preferred lifestyle and to assist in the growth of their community life. Sunnyhaven ensures that:

- Each person is provided with information to explore their options to achieve their desired outcomes
- The planning process is a balance of the person's freedom of choice, their individual needs, respecting family and carers' views and our duty of care

### **Person Centred Planning (PCP)**

Person centred planning forms a vital framework for the delivery of services whereby it establishes a partnership between people with a disability, their families and carers and the organisations that support them. Sunnyhaven strives to implement this practice to make participant's the centre of the decision making process. We focus on the person - who they are, how they would like to be involved in their community and what their future aspirations are.

## *Consent*

Each Participant is presumed to have the capacity to make their own decisions and those that do have the capacity will be consulted directly on any matters that require their consent. Should a Participant lack the capacity to make decisions, then Sunnyhaven staff will obtain consent from service users directly or from a legally appointed guardian.

*Sunnyhaven will always ask for a **participant's** permission before acting. If a **participant** cannot give consent themselves, then we will ask their guardian for consent.*

## *Decision Making and Choice*

Sunnyhaven supports each person receiving a service to make decisions and choices in all aspects of their lives. People have the opportunity to develop and maintain control over all decisions affecting their lives.

*Staff and Managers will listen to what **participant's** say about the things they want and the way the service **is run**.*





## Standard 4 – Feedback & Complaints

“When a person wants to make a complaint, the service provider will make sure the person’s views are respected, that they are informed as the complaint is dealt with, and have the opportunity to be involved in the resolution process”

Sunnyhaven welcomes complaints and feedback as a way to improve service delivery. We are committed to ensuring that any person or organisation using Sunnyhaven services, or affected by its operations has the right to lodge a complaint or to appeal a decision of the organisation and to have their concerns addressed in ways that ensure access and equality, fairness, accountability and transparency.

Feedback and complaints play an essential role in identifying areas which can lead to improved quality and delivery of services. participants can expect that Sunnyhaven will:

- treat each person fairly throughout the complaint process
- train staff to understand and have the capacity to handle complaints
- keep complaints confidential and resolve them in a fair and timely manner

Making a complaint.

Sunnyhaven shall follow the Complaints and Appeals Policy.

Complaints can be made verbally or in writing by: participant's, their families, carers or advocate<sup>a</sup>

- the manager of that staff member
- The Customer Relations Manager or;
- the CEO

Sunnyhaven will:

- examine the complaint within 48 hours of the complaint being received
- investigate the complaint and decide how to respond
- inform the complainant by letter within 7 days of what is being done to investigate and resolve the complaint and the expected time frame for resolutions
- aim to resolve complaints or appeals within 14 days of being received



The Customer Relations Manager will be responsible for receiving this correspondence and directing it to the appropriate person. If the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation and proposed resolution, they can seek a further review of the matter by writing to the CEO, or contracting an external complaints body.

Written complaints may be sent to:

*Sunnyhaven Disability Services*

*35 Beach Street*

*Kogarah NSW 2217*

### *Making a Complaint to External Statutory Bodies*

A formal external complaints procedure may follow if the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome. The complainant may refer the matter to independent third parties such as NSW Ombudsman, NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commission and the Australian Human Right Commission.

Sunnyhaven is mandated to report to the Quality and Safeguard Commission – Reportable Incidents within the first 24 hours and again in 5 days. These reports are around Abuse, Neglect or exploitation.

We will also provide you with a copy of the incident report whilst respecting the privacy of any other party involved. The Manager will provide this report to you.

***Sunnyhaven wants happy participants. If a Participant is unhappy with a service being provided, we want to know. Participants can complete the Complaint Form in this booklet to let us know what you are not happy about. The completed form should be given to a Sunnyhaven staff member.***

## **Standard 5 – Service Access**

“Each person is assisted to access the supports and services they need to live the life they choose”

Sunnyhaven makes information about the services we offer understandable and readily available so that participants and their families can make decisions about the options and services that best suit their individual needs and goals.



We are:

- Responsive in providing participant's and their families information on the services provided
- Proactive in reviewing service information, policies and practices
- Dedicated to working with other organisations within in the community to increase each person's support options

## Standard 6 – Service Management

“Service providers are well managed and have strong and effective governance to deliver positive outcomes for the people they support”

Sunnyhaven provides services in a safe and effectively governed environment with quality management systems that are responsive to the needs of the participant's. We ensure high quality services are provided by a committed, skilled workforce that understands the importance of the person centred approach.

We will act with Integrity, honesty and transparency in developing trusting relationships between people with disability, NDIS providers and workers that are required for high-quality service delivery. Our staff will be required to have the capacity, qualifications and training to be part of the Sunnyhaven team. Our potential staff will be required to undergo worker screening checks for a role. We have a code of conduct that each staff member must abide by .

### **Service Agreements**

Sunnyhaven will provide you with a quote and then a Service Agreement for services you wish to obtain from Sunnyhaven.

Sunnyhaven are committed to:

- maintaining and monitoring strong and effective corporate governance
- providing quality services that are well managed and delivered by caring, experienced staff



## Safety

Sunnyhaven aims to promote and maintain the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of all individuals. The organization will comply with all relevant federal and state legislation to ensure a safe workplace and all personnel have a responsibility to ensure a safe environment by implementing safe systems of work.

Sunnyhaven is committed to personal safety and the right of participant's to live in dignity and security without fear of threat or harm and to be free from exploitation and abuse.

The workplace health and safety of our staff and other people in the workplace is essential. Please read more about this in our service agreement.

**Sunnyhaven operates a safe physical environment and will keep participant's safe from harm at all times whilst they are within our service.**

## Medication Management

Sunnyhaven is committed to safe and effective prescription, storage, transportation, and administration of medication for participant's that is consistent with legislation and regulation.

Sunnyhaven will:

- Obtain all relevant medical and personal information from families, guardians and advocates at the commencement of their service
- Support participant's to maintain their independence for as long as possible, including managing their own medicines in a safe and effective way
- Ensure all medication will be in a Webster pack. The staff will not be able to administer medication if it is not
- Seek informed consent for any assistance it provides in medication management
- Collect and record accurate information about a Participant's medication
- Store and transport medicines in keeping with the manufacturer's requirements
- Only dispense those medicines retained in the original manufacturer's or other dispensed packaging unless a dose administration aid (DAA) could help to overcome specific problems that a Participant or staff member might face
- Ensure any staff providing assistance with medication are properly trained and assessed as competent to do so



*Sunnyhaven will support and assist **participant's** in taking their medication, and ensure that their medication is kept safe at all times.*

## Exiting Sunnyhaven Disability Services

Sunnyhaven acknowledges that at times the participant or the participant representative may choose to locate another service. There are also times that we may no longer be able to provide those services which could be attributed to a breach in the service agreement.

However we will work with all relevant parties to ensure the best transition process takes place and consent is obtained. Sometimes these situations are complex and require a number of important people to work together in the best interests of the participant.

Each participant has a right to withdraw their services with us at any time. We may require a notice period as per the terms of your service agreement.



### Consent Form

Each year we will ask you to sign a consent form. This may involve sharing information, obtaining reports from medical professions, taking photographs or seeking medical support to improve your health and wellbeing. You can withdraw consent at any time by speaking with the Manager of the program.



## Contacting Us

Sunnyhaven's office is located at:

35 Beach Street  
Kogarah NSW 2217

Hours of Operation:

Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm (excluding public holidays)

Tel: (02) 9588 5433 / Toll Free: 1300 040 804

Fax: (02) 9588 5066

Chief Executive Officer: Maree Mullins

Customer Relations Manager: Nazia Ahmed

Quality Manager: Philippa McNally

Chief Financial Officer: Karen Sarpkaya

Accommodation Manager: Roseanna Barletta

Day Programs Manager: Maree (Ree) Bosco

Human Resources Manager: Joumana Sanjakdar

## Other Useful Contacts

NDIS Quality and Safeguard Commission

NSW Ombudsman

Tel: 1800 035 544

Tel: 02 9286 1000

Website: <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au>

Website: [www.ombo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au)

Email: [nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au)

Council for Intellectual Disabilities

Tel: 02 9211 1611

Autism Spectrum Australia NSW

Website: [www.nswcid.org.au](http://www.nswcid.org.au)

Tel: 1800 227 328

Email: [info@nswcid.org.au](mailto:info@nswcid.org.au)

Website: [www.autismspectrum.org.au](http://www.autismspectrum.org.au)

Australian Human Rights Commission

Intellectual Disability Rights Service

Tel: 02 9284 9600

Tel: 02 9318 0144

Website: [www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au)

Website: [www.idrs.org.au](http://www.idrs.org.au)

Email: [infoservice@humanrights.gov.au](mailto:infoservice@humanrights.gov.au)

Email: [info@irds.org.au](mailto:info@irds.org.au)

Down Syndrome Association NSW

Carers Australia NSW

Tel: 02 9841 4444

Tel: 1800 242 636

Website: [www.downsyndromensw.org.au](http://www.downsyndromensw.org.au)

Website: [www.carersnsw.org.au](http://www.carersnsw.org.au)

Email: [admin@dsansw.org.au](mailto:admin@dsansw.org.au)

Email: [contact@carersnsw.org.au](mailto:contact@carersnsw.org.au)

## Feedback Form

Name:

Age of Participant:

*NB If the Participant is under 16 years of age, a parent/guardian signature is required*

Please tick: ☐ I am a Participant receiving the service  
☐ I am a family member, guardian or advocate of the participant  
☐ I am an employee  
☐ I wish to remain anonymous

Service Area: ☐ Accommodation - Address:  
☐ Day Program: ☐ CP, 35 Beach St, Kogarah  
☐ CAS, 2 Laycock Road, Penshurst  
☐ Coffee Club  
☐ Therapy Services

Date of Feedback:

Contact details:

Please outline the details of your feedback:

Have you spoken to anyone about this feedback?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, what happened?

What would you like to see done about this feedback?

*Thank you for your feedback, Sunnyhaven will use your feedback to improve the quality of the service delivered.*

*Please kindly send this feedback to:*

ATTN: Sunnyhaven Disability Services  
Address: 35 Beach Street,  
Kogarah NSW 2217

Phone: (02) 9588 5433  
Toll Free: 1300 040 804  
Fax: (02) 9588 5066

## Complaint Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

*NB If the Participant is under 16 years of age, a parent/guardian signature is required*

- Please tick: ☐ I am a Participant receiving the service  
☐ I am a family member, guardian or advocate of the Participant  
☐ I am an employee  
☐ I wish to remain anonymous

- Service Area: ☐ Accommodation - Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Day Program: ☐ CP, 35 Beach St, Kogarah  
☐ Coffee Club ☐ CAS, 2 Laycock Road, Penshurst  
☐ Therapy Services

Date of Complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

Please outline the details of your complaint:

*Please tell us your main concerns, including what led up to the complaint and who was involved.*

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Please outline what you would like to happen to resolve your complaint:

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please kindly send this complaint to:*

ATTN: Customer Relations Manager  
 Address: Sunnyhaven Disability Services  
 35 Beach Street, Kogarah NSW 2217

Phone: (02) 9588 5433 / Toll free 1300 040 804  
 Fax: (02) 9588 5066



# Guide to the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010

## Why the Act is needed in NSW

- The *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* (the Act) is needed to support the social inclusion of carers in NSW who provide support to another person because of disability, chronic illness, mental illness, dementia or ageing.
- In NSW there are approximately 850,000 family members, friends and neighbours who are carers.
- The Act introduces a standard definition of a carer which will help family, friends and service providers to identify carers.

The Act provides recognition for carers' contribution to the community and the person they care for through the establishment of a NSW Carers Charter.

The Act established a NSW Carers Advisory Council to promote the interests of carers. The Council also reviews and makes recommendations to the Minister for Disability Services and Minister for Ageing on relevant issues. The majority of members are carers.

The Act explains the obligations of government departments and local councils and the additional obligations of human service agencies.

## Benefits of the Act

Carers should have greater opportunities for employment and social inclusion which will improve their financial security and quality of life.

The public sector will benefit from workplace diversity, improved retention and increased staff morale and loyalty.

The community will benefit from flexible workplace arrangements, a socially inclusive community and the reassurance that if they become a carer they will be supported to continue caring and work.

## Other fact sheets in this series

- Who are carers?
- Guide for public sector staff
- Guide for public sector managers

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



## NSW Carers Charter

Government departments and local councils must make sure their staff are aware of and understand the NSW Carers Charter. Human service agencies must also reflect the Carers Charter principles in their daily activities.

The Charter contains 13 principles that provide guidance on issues of significance for carers, including respect and recognition, inclusion in decision making, and access to services they may need. In plain English the principles are:

- a. Recognise the valuable social and economic contribution that carers make to the people they care for and the community.
- b. Consider the health and wellbeing of carers.
- c. Take into account both the person being cared for and the carer when assessing, planning, delivering and reviewing services.
- d. Inform carers about services that can help them and refer them appropriately following their own assessment or the assessment of the person they care for.
- e. Respect the relationship between a carer and the person they care for.
- f. Recognise that carers have their own individual needs within and beyond their caring role that may be influenced by culture, age, disability, religion, socio-economic status, gender identification and place of residence.
- g. Recognise that children and young people under 25 who are carers (young carers) have the same rights as all children and young people.
- h. Support young carers to overcome any extra difficulties associated with their caring role.
- i. Carers should have the same rights, choices and opportunities as other Australians.
- j. Support carers' choices in their caring role and recognise them in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services.
- k. Acknowledge that rural and regionally based carers may need additional help to overcome barriers caused by isolation.
- l. Support for carers should be timely, responsive, appropriate and accessible.
- m. Acknowledge and recognise carers' knowledge and experience.

### More information and resources

Department of Family and Community Services

Web [www.facs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au) Email: [nswcarersact@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nswcarersact@facs.nsw.gov.au)

## 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 (eg. 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

Department of Family and Community Services

Web: [www.facs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au) | Email: [nswcarersact@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nswcarersact@facs.nsw.gov.au)

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

# AN AUSTRALIA THAT VALUES AND SUPPORTS ALL CARERS

Carers NSW recognises that carers are diverse  
and that every caring situation is unique.  
The information, referral and counselling we  
provide is tailored to the individual needs of  
every carer. If you know a carer who needs  
information or support, contact Carers NSW  
Carer Line 9am-5pm weekdays on

**1800 242 636\***

(\*freecall except from mobiles)  
or visit our website [www.carersnsw.org.au](http://www.carersnsw.org.au)

**9**  
Carers  
Australia **NSW**

**4Life** Family &  
Community  
Services

## CONTACT US

Level 10, 213 Miller Street, North Sydney NSW 2060  
PO Box 785, North Sydney NSW 2059  
**P** 02 9280 4744 **F** 02 9280 4755  
**Carer Line** 1800 242 636 (free call)  
[contact@carersnsw.org.au](mailto:contact@carersnsw.org.au)  
[www.carersnsw.org.au](http://www.carersnsw.org.au)

**9**  
Carers  
Australia **NSW**

**ARE YOU CARING  
FOR SOMEONE?**



**CARER LINE 1800 242 636**

AN AUSTRALIA THAT VALUES AND SUPPORTS ALL CARERS

## WHO CARES?

Carers are friends, partners or family members who provide support to someone who has a disability, mental illness, drug or alcohol dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail. Carers may care for a few hours a week or all day, every day. Carers are not paid for their role, however some are eligible for government benefits.



## WHAT IS CARING?

Each caring situation is unique. Some carers spend their days feeding, bathing, dressing, toileting, and administering medications. Others provide supervision or help with finances or transport. Carers also provide emotional support day in and day out for some of the most vulnerable, isolated members of our community.

Caring is a role that can be both challenging and rewarding. Caring can be personally enriching, but the extra physical, emotional and practical responsibilities associated with caring can have a big impact on your life. Your relationships, health and finances can all be affected by being a carer, and you may need different kinds of support during your caring role.

**Looking after yourself is important for your wellbeing as well as the person you care for.**

## PRACTICAL SUPPORT

- **Carers NSW Carer Line** is available on 1800 242 636 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm). Experienced Carer Support Officers offer information, advice and referrals.
- **Carer Gateway** is a national online and phone service with information and resources for carers. The online service finder helps carers connect to local support services. The Gateway is available from 8am-6pm on 1800 422 737 or visit [carergateway.gov.au](http://carergateway.gov.au)

**Respite** gives carers a break from their caring role, and it can be delivered in many different ways. For information on respite in your local area contact the Carer Line.

## EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Support from your social networks is important when you are a carer, but it can be hard to stay connected. You might like to get some extra support by talking to someone about your caring role.

Carers NSW offers a range of counselling options across the state through the National Carer Counselling Program:

- **Individual Counselling** is available for a small donation (no carer will be refused due to an inability to pay).
- **Therapeutic groups** meet face-to-face or over the phone (Talk-Link) and run for 6-8 weeks. We run general wellbeing groups, and more specific groups for different kinds of carers.

**Carer Support Groups** exist across NSW. We can help you find the right group for you.

**CALL THE CARER LINE ON 1800 242 636  
OR VISIT [CARERSNSW.ORG.AU](http://CARERSNSW.ORG.AU)**