

“Strengthening the Carer Culture in NSW Health”

NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 and NSW Carers Charter

Introduction

The NSW Carers (Recognition Act) 2010 is relevant to **all** health staff, including staff not directly involved in providing clinical care.

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

The NSW Government introduced the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act in 2010 to improve the recognition of carers and to acknowledge the valuable contribution carers make to our community and to the people they care for.

The Act established a Carers Charter which outlines principles to help staff understand and respond to the needs of carers.

Obligations Under the Act

Human service agencies (such as Local Health Districts) have obligations to:

- Ensure staff are aware of and understand the Act and its Charter.
- Consult with carers about policy that affects them.
- Support staff who are carers.
- Ensure that staff take action to reflect the principles of the Carers Charter.
- Report annually on compliance with the Act.

Recommendations of the NSW Carers Charter

Staff are encouraged to:

- Recognise carers' valuable contribution to the people they care for and their community by:
 - listening to carers and the people they care for
 - respecting and acknowledging carers' unique knowledge and expertise by including them in decision-making
 - taking into account their views and needs in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services for the person they are caring for.
- Support carers by:
 - being mindful of carers' health and wellbeing and finding out what support and services carers need
 - giving carers information about services that will sustain them in their caring role
 - recognising and supporting the choices carers make in their caring role
 - recognising and acknowledging carers' diversity (including cultural background, age, disability)

Recommendations

- This fact sheet be posted on LHD intranets/bulletin boards and circulated via LHD Carers Program staff email distribution lists.
- Copies of the NSW Carers Charter be displayed in health facilities/services –
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/publications/Publications/Rec-Act-Plain-English-Charter-Poster.pdf>