

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District



Family and Carer

Resource Book

St George Mental Health Service

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1 Contact numbers

1.1 Emergency contacts

13YARN -Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Crisis Support 24/7	13 92 763
Domestic Violence Line 24/7	1800 656 463
Lifeline 24/7	13 11 14
Mental Health Line 24/7	1800 011 511
Police, Fire, Ambulance 24/7	000

1.2 Mental Health Service contact numbers

Wards can be contacted 24 hours a day, seven days a week (24/7)

Please note that some of the contacts listed only operate during business hours

If you need an interpreter, please call Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450

Service / Clinic	Phone Number
Acute Adult Inpatient Mental Health Service	02 9113 2432
Acute Care Team	02 9553 2595
Adult Community Mental Health Service	02 9553 2500
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	02 8198 7300
COPMI Coordinator	02 9553 2500
Family and Carer Consultant	02 9553 2500
Older Persons Community Mental Health Unit	02 9113 4863
Older Persons Inpatient Mental Health Service	02 9113 2432
Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Service (PIMHS)	02 8198 7300
Psychiatric Emergency Care Centre (PECC)	02 9113 1419

1.3 Useful websites

Service	Website
13YARN – Resources to support mob during challenging times	www.13yarn.org.au/factsheets
Carer Gateway - Emotional, practical, and financial support for carers	www.carergateway.gov.au
Carers Australia - Peak body representing carers in Australia	www.carersaustralia.com.au
Choice and Medication – Information about medications used in mental health conditions	www.choiceandmedication.org/seslhd-mentalhealth/
Family Drug Support - For family members and friends supporting a person who uses alcohol and/or drugs	www.fds.org.au
headspace - National youth mental health foundation	www.headspace.org.au
Karitane – Parental support, education and advice	www.karitane.com.au
Mental Health Carers NSW - Peak body representing mental health carers in NSW	www.mentalhealthcarersnsw.org
Recovery and Wellbeing College - Provides education that promotes healing, wellbeing and recovery	www.seslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/recovery-wellbeing-college
Relationships Australia - Relationship support services	www.relationships.org.au
SANE Australia - Support services	www.sane.org
Services Australia - Government payments/supports for carers	www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/caring-for-someone
Transcultural Mental Health Centre - Support for carers from culturally and linguistically diverse communities	www.dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/tmhc
Young Carer Program	www.carersnsw.org.au/services-and-support/programs-services/young-carers/young-carer-program-at-carers-nsw



As a service, we...

Acknowledge the contribution of family members and loved ones

Value the knowledge of family members and loved ones

Respect family and carer rights

Offer support to family members and loved ones



A Caregiver's Bill of Rights

I have the right . . .

- To take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the capacity to take better care of my loved one.
- To seek help from others even though my loved one may object. I recognise the limits of my own endurance and strength.
- To feel safe at all times when caring for my loved one.
- To maintain facets of my own life that do not include the person I care for. I know that I do everything that I reasonably can for this person, and I have the right to do some things for myself.
- To reject any attempt by my loved one (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me.
- To take pride in what I am accomplishing and to applaud the courage it has sometimes taken to meet the needs of my loved one.
- To protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me if there is a time when my loved one no longer needs my help.
- To expect and demand that new strides are made in finding ways to support caregivers.

3.2 Carers and the NSW Mental Health Act 2007

The **NSW Mental Health Act 2007** recognises the value of carers and supports their right to information and inclusion in decisions about treatment and discharge. It also ensures that professionals take into account any information provided by carers, relatives and friends.

Professionals are required to maintain the confidentiality and privacy rights of any person who accesses mental health services. It is important that professionals balance consumer privacy with the rights of carers. This protects both the carer and care recipient, during and after accessing a mental health service. Be sure to inform the relevant professional that you are a carer when you first come into contact with a service.

A consumer can nominate up to two '**designated carers**' to receive information about their condition and treatment plan. They can also nominate people who they do not want to receive information about, or be consulted about, their treatment. Nominations are valid for twelve months, but consumers can make changes any time.

A '**principal care provider**' can be identified by the authorised medical officer or director of community treatment of a mental health facility. This person is the individual who is primarily responsible for providing support or care to a care recipient. They can be, but do not have to be, a designated carer as well.

Designated carers and principal care providers should be informed of issues relating to admission, detainment, incidents of absconding, planned discharge, transfer, or in cases where a community treatment order or a particular therapy is being considered. They can also request information about the types and dosages of medication being administered.

If you are not a designated carer or principal care provider, you do not have the same rights to information about a care recipient but can contact a hospital or service and advise them of your views or concerns. The treating team should take your views into account.

If a consumer has an appointed guardian, that person is automatically their only 'designated carer'. Consumers between 14 and 18 years of age can nominate someone other than their parents to be their designated carer.

For more information on caring for someone with mental health issues go to:
www.mentalhealthcarersnsw.org/resources/carers-rights-under-the-mental-health-act/

3.3 REACH – Patient and Family-Activated Escalation

What is REACH?

You know the person you care for best.

The REACH program helps you share your concerns with us.

We encourage you to first raise your concerns directly with your nurse or doctor. If you still feel worried, call your local **St George Hospital REACH number 02 9113 2213**.

Who can use REACH?

REACH can be used by patients **currently in our hospital** or by their family members or carers.

Making the call

Tell the operator:

- Who you are (patient, family member, carer)
- That you need a REACH call
- The name of the ward
- The bed number

Will I offend staff if I make a REACH call?

No. We want patients, family members and carers to be involved and create the best experience possible.

Are you worried
about a recent **change** in your **condition**
or that of your loved one?
If yes... REACH out.

WHAT IS REACH ABOUT?

- R** You may recognise a worrying change in your condition or in the person you care for.
- E** **1** Engage (talk) with the nurse or doctor. Tell them your concerns.
- A** **2** Ask the nurse in charge for a "Clinical Review". This should occur within 30 minutes.
- C** **3** If you are still worried call REACH. You can use your bedside phone or ask for a ward phone.
- H** Call **REACH** on your local REACH number. Help is on its way.

Speak to your nurse or doctor first.
They may be able to help with your concerns.

4 Hospital Visitors

Visitors are welcome in our wards from 10am-12:30pm and 3pm-8pm:

- Maximum of 2 visitors at a time
- Please phone the ward in advance before visiting
- Visitors are requested to leave personal items in the lockers provided before they enter the unit
- All items for consumers will be checked by staff
- Visitors are required to comply with the prohibition of bringing items listed as indicated in the prohibited items list displayed at the ward entrance
- Visitors may be asked to leave at any time at the discretion of nursing staff
- St George Mental Health has zero tolerance for any form of aggression towards staff and others.

Our wards:

Acute Adult Inpatient Mental Health Service - We provide a variety of interventions and therapies for adults who are experiencing acute symptoms of their mental health disorder and requires care within an inpatient setting.

Psychiatric Emergency Care Centre (PECC) - We offer short term care to consumers who requires urgent mental health care and intervention.

Older Persons' Inpatient Mental Health Service wards - We are a specialist clinical multidisciplinary team that provides assessments, management and care of people 65 years and over, and Aboriginal people over 50 years who are at risk of or who are experiencing a psychological disorder or mental illness.

4.1 Parking



Parking is available in surrounding streets and paid parking stations are located on Gray Street, Belgrave Street or Kensington Street.

The Hospital Car Park(s) can be accessed from:

Gray Street for Gray St Car Park 7:00am – 9:00pm daily

Belgrave Street Car Park 6:00am – 11:30pm daily

Kensington Street for Kensington Car Park Open 24 Hours daily

Accessible parking spaces for people with a disability are in both Gray Street and Belgrave Street carparks.

Reduced parking fees are available to eligible patients and carers at every NSW public hospital where fees apply. Speak to the treating team for more information.

4.2 Feedback, Concerns and Complaints

Please discuss any concerns with the staff members caring for your loved one, the nurse in charge of the ward, or the manager of the department. You can provide feedback face to face or via email or letter.

If the matter is not resolved, you can provide your feedback to the Hospital's Consumer Feedback Manager by:

- **Phone:** 02 9113 2687 or 9113 2617
- **Email:** SESLHD-STG-ConsumerFeedback@health.nsw.gov.au
- **Writing a letter:** Patient Experience Manager, St George Hospital, Gray Street, Kogarah NSW 2217

If you want help talking to hospital staff, advice about your rights, and any concerns you have about treatment contact the **Official Visitors Program** 1800 208 218 or OfficialVisitorsProgram@health.nsw.gov.au or visit www.officialvisitorsmh.nsw.gov.au/Pages/OVP

4.3 Involuntary and voluntary patients

An **involuntary patient** is someone being cared for in hospital or the community who does not wish to receive treatment. They must be experiencing symptoms of a mental illness (as defined in the Mental Health Act 2007) and be at a serious risk of harm to themselves or others. Treatment is necessary for the person's own protection or protection of others from serious harm. While serious harm is not defined in the Mental Health Act, it is interpreted to include physical harm, financial harm, harm to reputation or relationships, neglect of self, and neglect of others.

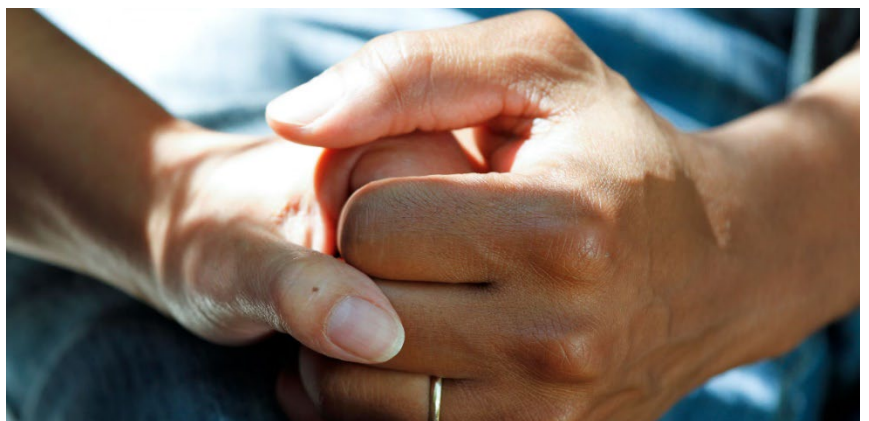
An involuntary patient can be brought by an authorised ambulance officer, accredited mental health professionals, police or magistrates to a declared mental health facility e.g. emergency department or mental health inpatient unit, for further mental health assessment.

After arriving at hospital, a person must be given a form explaining their rights and examined by a doctor within 12 hours. If the doctor finds the person is 'not mentally ill' nor 'disordered', they must be discharged or may be made a voluntary patient if they need inpatient treatment. This is considered the least restrictive option for care. If they find the person is 'mentally ill' or 'disordered' a further examination is conducted, usually by a psychiatrist.

A **voluntary patient** receives treatment, care or observation, at their own will. The Mental Health Review Tribunal must review a voluntary patient who remains in care for a continuous period of more than 12 months.

For more information about the Mental Health Act, its terminology, and consumer and carer rights under the Act, visit:

Mental Health Coordinating Council Mental Health Rights Manual <https://mhrm.mhcc.org.au/>



4.4 Mental Health Carer Experience Survey

Your feedback helps us improve our mental health services.

The **Mental Health Carers Experience Survey** is a national survey asking about carer experiences of mental health services. It was designed with carers and mental health staff.

You can complete the paper form, found in our waiting rooms and wards, or online via <https://www.yourexperience.health.nsw.gov.au/>

Be sure to click on the green 'Carer' icon. You will also need a service code for the online form, which can be provided by a staff member.

Alternatively, contact the Family and Carer Consultant on 02 9553 2500.

5 Support for Family and Carers

5.1 Family and Carer Mental Health Program

The Family and Carer Mental Health Program aims to ensure families and carers receive appropriate support, information and referrals to fulfill their roles as carers while also sustaining their own health and wellbeing.

How we can Help

- We can provide information and support to better understand Mental health challenges and recovery
- Assist in improving relationships and communication within the family
- Assist in learning coping and self-care strategies
- Referrals and links to other services

How to Access Support

If you wish to have support to better understand your family member's mental health or to improve your relationships and communication within the family, you can speak to your family member's doctor or primary clinician who will organise a referral to the Family and Carer Mental Health team.

5.2 Support for Children



Episodes of mental illness and hospitalisation can be confusing and stressful for children.

COPMI (children of parents with a mental illness) is part of the family focused recovery program in mental health services.

The COPMI Coordinator can assist families find the most helpful way to talk to children about mental illness, provide

resources and meet directly with families and children to provide counselling and support. The

COPMI Coordinator can speak to you about parenting concerns, help build parenting skills and refer to additional supports or services to support you and your children.

COPMI supports the children (0-17 years) and family of people who are linked in with community or inpatient mental health services.

Children, regardless of their age will benefit from some level of age-appropriate information to help them to make sense of mental health, mental illness and their own experience.

How to refer to COPMI

Please speak with your primary clinician about referral or contact to:

Family Focused Recovery COPMI Coordinator, St George and Sutherland Health Services on 02 9553 2500.

South Eastern Sydney Recovery & Wellbeing College

South Eastern Sydney Recovery and Wellbeing College provides education to encourage learning and growth for better mental health.

It is currently FREE of charge and open to people 16 years of age and over in our community, including for carers and family members.

The education and training programs are developed and delivered in partnership with people who have lived experience of mental health concerns and health professionals.

Carers may benefit from any course including:

- Supporting Recovery and Looking After Yourself as a Carer (offered after hours)
- Mindfulness Courses
- Navigating Mental Health and Other Services (available in other languages)
- Understanding the Mental Health Act
- Exploring Grief and Loss (available in Greek)
- Explanatory Frameworks for Mental Distress
- Coping with Strong Emotions

Course Guides and further information is available on their website:
www.seslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/recovery-wellbeing-college

Contact details

P: (02) 9113 2981

E: seslhd-recoverycollege@health.nsw.gov.au

The experience of a mental health condition not only affects the individual, but those closest to them. With Family and Carers support, you can learn skills that support your own mental health, and the people you care for.

Our family and carer support program is run by an organisation called Stride.

Stride offers individual support sessions, support groups, compassion and practical advice, and information and education programs for loved ones, friends and family.

Our friendly Stride workers are available to meet with you to provide reassurance, information and assistance.

Support groups are organised locally for families and carers.

For an appointment, local support group information, or anything else related to Stride, please phone 02 9129 8795 or email familyandcarer@stride.com.au



Do your caring responsibilities affect your ability to work, study or socialise? Are you looking for some support?

Carer Gateway is the Australian Government's national carer hub providing free services, supports and advice for carers. It is for anyone who is an unpaid carer, whether you are receiving a government carer payment or not.

Carers can be any age and can provide any type of care. Some carers provide support 24 hours a day and help with daily living, while other carers provide fewer hours of support and help with occasional transport or cooking. Some carers provide support to someone who doesn't live with them.

Carer Gateway provides many services to support carers in their caring role, including:

- in-person and online peer support groups
- tailored support packages to help with accessing planned respite, transport services, and more
- in-person and phone counselling
- in-person and online self-guided coaching
- online skills courses to support your wellbeing and understanding of legal responsibilities relating to the caring role
- access to emergency respite if you suddenly find you can't provide care, for example if you become ill or injured.

To contact Carer Gateway:

Visit: www.carergateway.gov.au

Phone: 1800 422 737 Monday to Friday 8am - 5pm

5.6 Transcultural Mental Health Centre

The Transcultural Mental Health Centre offers language-specific support groups as well as education sessions and annual forums.

There are support groups specifically for loved ones of people experiencing mental illness offered in Arabic, Assyrian, Cantonese, Dari/Farsi, Khmer, Macedonian and Serbian, Spanish and Vietnamese. There is also a Greek mental health carer support group in Canterbury run by One Door Mental Health.

For more information, contact Transcultural Mental Health CALD Carer Support Program on 9912 3850 or speak with our Family and Carer Consultant on 9382 4918.

If you need an interpreter, please ask our staff to help. You can call the service using a phone interpreter on 131 450. Professional interpreters are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week if you need help understanding or speaking English. Interpreter services are free and confidential.

6 Document Version Control

Version number	Dates	Revision	Consultation (Author and Position)
1	02/2023	Document drafted	William Morrow, Family and Carer Consultant, ESMHS
1.1	15/02/2023	Partnerships and Transitions Team development, review, and amendment	Jarrad Hickmott, MHS Consumer Partnerships Coordinator
1.2	27/03/2023	Carer Representative amended with feedback	Leigh Yardy, MHS Carer Representative
2	06/2024	Reviewed and updated to style guide and CES data	Sydney Boucher, MHS Family and Carer Program Manager
2.1	06/2024	Local facility and Family and Carer Program staff review	Paige Tatum, COPMI Coordinator Helen Ledlin, Family and Carer Consultant
2.2	05/08/2024	Reviewed and updated visitor information	Nurse Unit Managers, St George Mental Health Service
2.3	10/08/2024	Tabled at Clinical Governance and endorsed with feedback.	Andrew Szemenyei, CAMHS Manager Bronwen Iferd, Peer Manager Melissa Wilkinson, Nurse Manager Navigator
2.3	October 2024	Published	
2.4	January 2025	Link to Recovery and Wellbeing College website updated. Published.	

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