



Government of **Western Australia**  
**South Metropolitan Health Service**  
Fremantle Hospital and Health Service

# Fremantle Hospital Mental Health Service

# Information for Carers



[fh.health.wa.gov.au](http://fh.health.wa.gov.au)



**The purpose of this booklet is to  
empower you by giving you  
information, support and hope.**

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Whether it is the first or one of many times a loved one has been admitted to hospital because of a mental illness, it causes the carer or family members mental distress of their own.



# A letter from a carer whose daughter has been affected by a mental illness

*Dear family and carers,*

Often, when a person has been admitted to a psychiatric ward, it follows a traumatic event which greatly affects the family/ carer, as well as the person who is unwell. It is useful for carers to find out as much information about the hospitalisation as possible, including: What is going on for the patient, how to contact the care coordinator, general information about the ward, and how to be involved in discharge planning.

It is also useful to know about the rights of carers in mental health services. It is important to find out how to gain coping skills for you, we all need hope, and to believe that things will be ok. In difficult times, we might need someone else to hold the hope.

What I have learned from my journey is that I needed to build a network of support. This could include a number of people:

- Two or three friends, or family members, who you can phone whenever you need to talk to someone about what is going on for you, it is really important to have someone who can just listen to how you are feeling at that time.
- The social worker from the ward
- Counselling lines from carer support organisation
- Support organisations like Carers WA, MIFWA
- Lifeline, and Alcohol and drug information.

*From Lyn*





Carers provide unpaid support to someone with a mental illness. You may be the person's wife, husband, partner, son, daughter, sister, brother, parent, relative, neighbour or friend. It doesn't matter how many hours per week are spent providing support. Carers may live with the person they are caring for, providing assistance with daily needs, or may visit the person weekly or call regularly. Being a carer involves an investment of time, energy and support.

**Carers are our partners** in providing compassionate healthcare.  
**We need to work together** to make sure that your family member or friend receives the best possible care.

# Your rights as a carer

**Carers can expect the mental health team to provide care in line with the Western Australian Carers Charter (*Carers Recognition Act 2004*), and:**

- introduce themselves and advise you of their role in caring for the person who has been admitted to the service.
- treat you with dignity and respect.
- explain the level of information that can be shared and the reason for this.
- reply appropriately to any concerns or queries.
- provide you with access to interpreters if you need them.
- keep personal information confidential and respect your privacy.

**You should expect to be informed about:**

- your right to seek further opinions on the diagnosis and care of your family member or friend.
- taking time for yourself and not having to be available to your family member or friend at all times.
- your right to make complaints and how you would go about doing this.
- information and support programs available for carers.

**If your family member or friend gives permission, you can also expect the mental health team to:**

- discuss the available treatment options with you.
- involve you in developing a management plan.
- involve you in discharge planning and ongoing care.

# Checklists for communicating with staff

The following checklists provide prompts that may be beneficial to you in seeking information.

## **Ask if you can be provided with verbal and written information about:**

- the specific mental illness and diagnosis.
- the sorts of behaviours you might expect and how to handle them.
- medication – alternatives, benefits and possible side effects.
- the rights and responsibilities of people who have a mental illness, you, as their carers, and mental health staff who work in this service.
- your rights if your family member or friend doesn't consent to share information with you
- what the treatment plan involves and aims to achieve.
- what a crisis awareness plan might involve.
- what the person's recovery plan involves.
- the roles of each staff member involved in the care of your family member or friend.
- local services available for your family member/friend.
- local services available to assist you as their carer.
- local and national support groups.

## **You can expect:**

- ongoing opportunities to ask questions and discuss concerns.
- the opportunity to meet with staff on your own.
- assurances that the information you discuss with staff will be kept confidential.
- assurances that you are a valued member of the care team.
- practical and emotional support.
- an assessment of your own needs to help you in your role as a carer.

**In addition to your right to be informed/involved, at least one personal support person must be informed each time any of the following ‘notifiable events’ happen:**

- A detention order, inpatient treatment order, or community treatment order is made, cancelled or expires.
- Any other order is made under the Mental Health Act 2014 after the patient is examined by a psychiatrist.
- The patient is released after being detained.
- A transport order is made to take the patient to a hospital.
- The patient is transferred from one hospital to another.
- The patient is granted leave from hospital, the leave is extended, varied or cancelled or the patient is absent from hospital without leave.
- The patient is given urgent non-psychiatric treatment while admitted as an involuntary patient.

**Ensure you communicate to mental health staff:**

- any relevant information regarding your family member/friend such as changes in behaviour, use of drugs or alcohol.
- information that may influence the choice of medication or treatment, such as allergies.
- information about benefits or side effects of medication or treatment previously prescribed.
- any problems you have in caring for your family member/friend such as unwillingness to take medication or to get up in the morning.
- any help needed to solve problems or handle specific situations.



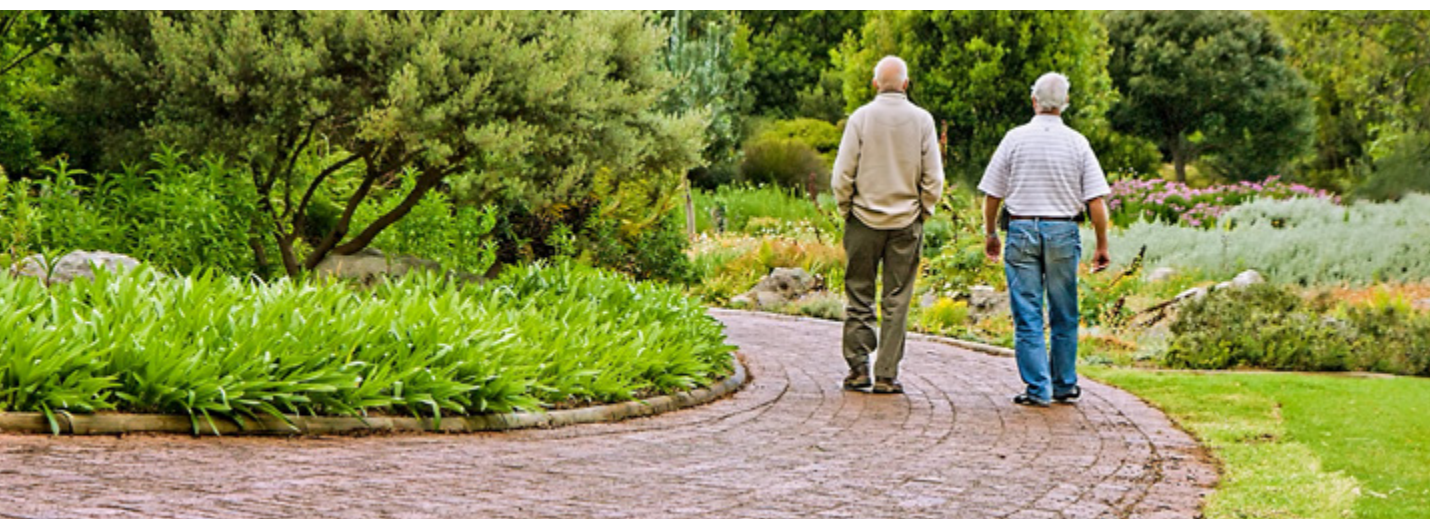
# Balancing your needs with your caring role

It can be challenging for family and other carers to deal with the person's illness, her/his behaviour and needs, and the impact this has on family life.

It's important to access professional help to assist you in your caring role and to provide practical strategies and reassurance.

## **Strategies may include:**

- Allow time each week to do something you enjoy, to make you feel relaxed, refreshed and that life is good.
- Eat regularly and well. Poor sleep and diet will only add to your overall stress levels.
- Exercise as much as possible – even a short brisk walk will help.
- Take regular time out and/or holidays.
- Establish clear boundaries with the person you care for. Be clear about what you can, and cannot do – and stick to it.
- Ensure there is at least one supportive person with whom you can talk confidentially. It is easy to lose your perspective and sense of humour if you feel isolated.
- Remember that your GP can be a source of help. Take a friend with you if you think you may not be able to tell the doctor how you are feeling.
- Learning about the mental illness you are dealing with will help you understand it and act appropriately, even if the person you care for doesn't want to know.
- Joining a carers group may help relieve isolation, stress and loneliness, and help you understand different types of illness.



# Complaints process

If you feel that something is not right, let the mental health team know by asking to speak to a senior team member. You might like to have another family member or friend present to help you if this situation arises. Generally, concerns will be easily resolved if you let staff know as soon as possible. If you are still concerned or need more information, there are other people who can assist you:

- **Fremantle Hospital Mental Health Service**  
Head of Mental Health or Service Lead  
Phone: 9431 3555
- **Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO)**  
[www.hadsco.wa.gov.au](http://www.hadsco.wa.gov.au)  
Complaints and enquiries line: (08) 6551 7600  
Country Free Call: 1800 813 583
- **Mental Health Advocacy Service**  
[www.mhas.wa.gov.au](http://www.mhas.wa.gov.au)  
Phone: 6234 6300  
Free call: 1800 999 057

## Discharge from the hospital

The person you care for may only be in hospital for a short period until his or her illness has been stabilised. He or she may be referred to a less intensive service such as a community service or private psychiatrist.

Discharge planning will start from the moment your friend or family member starts receiving treatment from the mental health service. The treating team will involve you in these discussions wherever possible.

**When your friend or family member leaves the hospital they will be given a discharge plan/summary that contains details of:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ▪ The level of ongoing care necessary             | ▪ Responsibility for medication                             |
| ▪ Who is providing this care, where and how often | ▪ Provision of information and support to everyone involved |
| ▪ Accommodation arrangements                      | ▪ Development of a relapse prevention plan.                 |

**It is important that you feel involved in the discharge plan**, including being involved in the decision to discharge the person. Carers are critical partners in this process.

# How can I find out more about mental illness?

It is important to talk to your general practitioner about any concerns you have about mental illness. Carers can also call the SANE Helpline on 1800 18 SANE (7263) for confidential information and advice. SANE Australia produces a range of easy-to-read publications and multimedia resources on mental illness.

For information regarding diagnosis, treatment and medication the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) has developed a number of guidelines which can help you gain a deeper understanding of specific diagnoses. These are available in printed form or from the RANZCP website: [www.ranzcp.org](http://www.ranzcp.org)

## Other resources are available from:

The Office of the Chief Psychiatrist – [www.chiefpsychiatrist.wa.gov.au](http://www.chiefpsychiatrist.wa.gov.au)

Mental Health Commission – [www.mentalhealth.wa.gov.au](http://www.mentalhealth.wa.gov.au)





# Glossary of useful terms

## Assessment and Treatment Team (ATT)

The ATT is the entry point to FHMHS for people aged between 18 and 65. The ATT's principal role is to review, assess and provide short-term care for referred clients and consumers who self-present. People who self-present are thoroughly assessed before being treated or referred to other services.

## Carer/family

A family member, relative or friend who provides ongoing unpaid care and support to a person with a mental illness.

## Care coordinator

Is the nominated person who has the responsibility for coordinating, facilitating and integrating mental health treatment, care and support to a mental health consumer, their family/carers and significant others. This care is tailored to meet the specific needs of individual consumers by:

- Helping to develop a treatment plan and work towards recovery.
- Educating about mental illness and managing symptoms.
- Linking to other services and community organisations.
- Being the contact person in the mental health service.
- Providing support and education to families and carers.

## Community services

Mental health services provided in the community where the consumer lives, provided by the hospital's multidisciplinary community team. This team works with the consumer and their carers to monitor the consumer's wellbeing, progress on their management plan, identify risks and support recovery.

## Consent

All voluntary patients must give informed consent before treatment is given. Sufficient information should be provided to enable the person to make a balanced decision about treatment including alternatives and risks.

## Consumer

A person who receives treatment from a mental health service.

## Inpatient services

Services, care and treatment provided to patients admitted to a mental health unit in either an open or secure ward setting. For most consumers treatment involves a combination of medication, group programs and supportive counselling. The ward provides a safe supportive place where the consumer can recover from a crisis. Staff can assess their risks, wellness and progress. It also gives consumers a chance to re-establish control and responsibility in a supported setting.



## Involuntary patient

If a consumer has a mental illness that requires treatment, or they are a significant risk to themselves or others and are not well enough to make a decision about treatment, a psychiatrist may complete an inpatient treatment order. An inpatient treatment order under the *Mental Health Act 2014* requires the patient to receive treatment in hospital as an involuntary patient. The patient cannot leave hospital until the treatment order ends, unless they are granted leave by their psychiatrist.

## Mental Health Advocacy Service

The Mental Health Advocacy Service (MHAS) is a free, independent service helping people with a mental illness know and protect their rights. They advocate according to the patient's wishes and make sure they are heard. An involuntary patient on a community treatment order, or who has been referred for assessment by a psychiatrist, or is on a hospital or custody order, can expect to be contacted by an advocate within seven days.

## Mental health service

A service that provides specialised assessment, treatment and support for people experiencing mental illness. Includes public and private inpatient (hospital) and community-based services.

## Mental illness

A diagnosed health problem that significantly affects how a person thinks, behaves and interacts with other people.

## Older adult mental health triage (OAMH)

The process of reviewing all older adult mental health (65 years and older) referrals to decide urgency and type of services required.

## Multidisciplinary teams

Specialist mental health services provide treatment and support through multidisciplinary teams made up of professionals from various disciplines (e.g. psychiatrists, doctors, nurses, social workers, psychologists, occupational therapists, aboriginal liaison officers, welfare officers and drug/alcohol workers).

## Nurse

Nurses promote health, prevent illness, and care for people when they are ill. They work in a broad range of health settings including in hospitals and GP clinics. Some have received specialist training in mental health. When your family member or friend is in hospital it is the nurses who will provide 24-hour care.

## Occupational therapist

Occupational therapists assess the practical skills that a person has and develop programs to support recovery. This may include learning new skills to manage day to day living and build independence.

## Physiotherapist

Physiotherapists use physical methods e.g. light, heat, massage and ultrasound to alleviate physical pain or discomfort and restore/maximize physical functions.

## Psychiatrist

A senior doctor who specialises in diagnosing and treating mental illnesses. Psychiatrists can prescribe medication.

## Psychiatric registrar

A doctor who is undertaking specialised training for registration as a psychiatrist. Registrars can prescribe medication.

## Psychologist

Psychologists are specialised in the assessment of behaviour and mental functioning. They help people change the way they think, feel and act towards themselves and other people. Psychologists are not trained in general medicine and do not prescribe medication.

## Recovery

For a person with mental illness, recovery means gaining and retaining hope, understanding of one's abilities and disabilities, engaging in an active life, personal autonomy, social identity, meaning, purpose and a positive sense of self. It is important to remember that recovery is not the same as cure.

## Social worker

A social worker helps people make changes to the way they live. This may involve assisting them with their finances or accommodation and helping them navigate community welfare services.

## Voluntary patient

A person who agrees to be admitted to a hospital because a psychiatrist believed they would benefit from the treatment and care they would receive in hospital.

# Carer organisations

## Helping minds

Mental health services and carer support.

24-hour support line or regional.

Phone: 9427 7100

Phone: 1800 811 747 (Country Callers)

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

## Carer Advisory and Counselling Service

[www.carersaustralia.com.au](http://www.carersaustralia.com.au)

Free call: 1800 242 636

## Carers WA

[www.carerswa.asn.au](http://www.carerswa.asn.au)

182 Lord Street, Perth WA 6000

PO BOX 638, Mt Lawley WA 6929

Phone: 1300 CARERS (1300 227 377)

Carers Counselling Line: 1800 007 332

## Children of parents with mental illness

[www.copmi.net.au](http://www.copmi.net.au)

# Organisations for consumers and carers

## Richmond Wellbeing

[www.rfwa.org.au](http://www.rfwa.org.au)

Phone: 9350 8800

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

## Mental Illness Fellowship Western Australia

[www.mifwa.org.au](http://www.mifwa.org.au)

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

Telephone: (08) 9237 8900

## SANE

[www.sane.org](http://www.sane.org)

Helpline: 1800 187 263

## RUAH Community Service

[www.ruah.com.au](http://www.ruah.com.au)

GPO BOX 2828, West Perth WA 6872

Phone: 9485 3939

Fax: 9481 0808

## Headspace – Fremantle

A 24-hour telephone and online counselling service for 5 to 25 year olds in Australia.

[www.headspace.org.au](http://www.headspace.org.au)

Phone: 9335 6333

## Beyondblue

[www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

Phone: 1300 224 636

## Alcoholics anonymous

[www.aa.org.au](http://www.aa.org.au)

Phone: 1300 222 222

## Alzheimers Australia

[www.fightdementia.org.au](http://www.fightdementia.org.au)

National Dementia helpline:

1800 100 500

# Other support organisations

## **Fremantle Multicultural Centre**

241–3 High Street, Fremantle WA 6160

Phone: 9336 8282

Email: [administration@fmcwa.com.au](mailto:administration@fmcwa.com.au)

## **Relationships Australia**

[www.relationships.org.au](http://www.relationships.org.au)

Phone: 1300 364 277

## **WA Interpreters**

Phone: 9361 3248

Email: [admin@wainterpreters.com.au](mailto:admin@wainterpreters.com.au)

## **Centrecare**

[www.centrecare.com.au](http://www.centrecare.com.au)

456 Hay Street, Perth 6000

Phone: 9325 6644

Email: [enquiries@centrecare.com.au](mailto:enquiries@centrecare.com.au)

## **AnglicareWA**

[www.anglicarewa.org.au](http://www.anglicarewa.org.au)

Phone: 9263 2000

## **Grow WA Support Groups**

[www.actbelongcommit.org.au](http://www.actbelongcommit.org.au)

Phone: 9228 1411

Free Call: 1800 558 268

## **Counselling Online**

Drug and alcohol counselling online

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

[www.counsellingonline.org.au](http://www.counsellingonline.org.au)

Phone: 1800 888 236



# Your Carers Plan

## Fremantle Hospital Mental Health Service

Location: W Block, Alma Street, Fremantle.  
Phone: 9431 3555  
Fax: 9431 3479  
Email: [alma.street@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:alma.street@health.wa.gov.au)

### Visiting hours

Monday to Friday: 4pm to 8pm  
Weekends and public holidays: 9am to 8pm

### Getting there

The service is located on the corner of Alma Street and Hampton Road in Fremantle and has good access to public transport.

The closest train station is Fremantle. The Fremantle CAT is a free circle bus service that departs from Fremantle Train Station and passes the hospital on South Terrace every 10 minutes. Please visit [www.transperth.wa.gov.au](http://www.transperth.wa.gov.au) for more information on bus/train timetables.

## Carers contact list

For patient: .....

Treating Community Psychiatrist: .....

Admitting Psychiatrist: .....

Care Coordinator: .....

GP: .....

Community Mental Health Team: .....

Partner: .....

Parent: .....

Friend: .....

# A Crisis Awareness Plan

A Crisis Awareness Plan (CAP) may be developed with your family member/friend and a copy provided to you as their carer with their consent. It will help guide you if you are worried about their behaviour or if they are becoming ill again.

Copy of CAP provided ☐ yes ☐ no

## When your family member/friend should re-engage

Early warning of relapse	Action Plan
Mild:	
Moderate:	
Severe:	

## Medication regime

These are the medications your family member/friend has been prescribed.

Medication	Reason for medication	Choice and medication CMI
		<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> yes
		<input type="checkbox"/> yes

CMI – Consumer medication information.

# Where **you** can get help

- Your general practitioner.
- Your mental health service – Phone: **9431 3555**
- Mental Health Emergency Response Line – Phone: **1300 555 788** (local call)
- For immediate counselling assistance call Lifeline on **13 11 14** (24-hours).

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Designation: .....

Date: .....

## Contact us

**Fremantle Hospital  
Mental Health Service**

Alma Street, FREMANTLE WA 6160  
PO Box 480, FREMANTLE WA 6959  
Telephone: (08) 9431 3333  
[www.fh.health.wa.gov.au](http://www.fh.health.wa.gov.au)



This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.

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