

A Resource for
Family and Friend Carers



Prepare to Care

Do you provide ongoing care and support to a family member or friend who has a disability, mental health challenge, chronic condition, terminal illness, an alcohol or other drug dependency, or who is frail aged?

Is the person you care for currently in hospital or being admitted into hospital? If so, this book is for you.

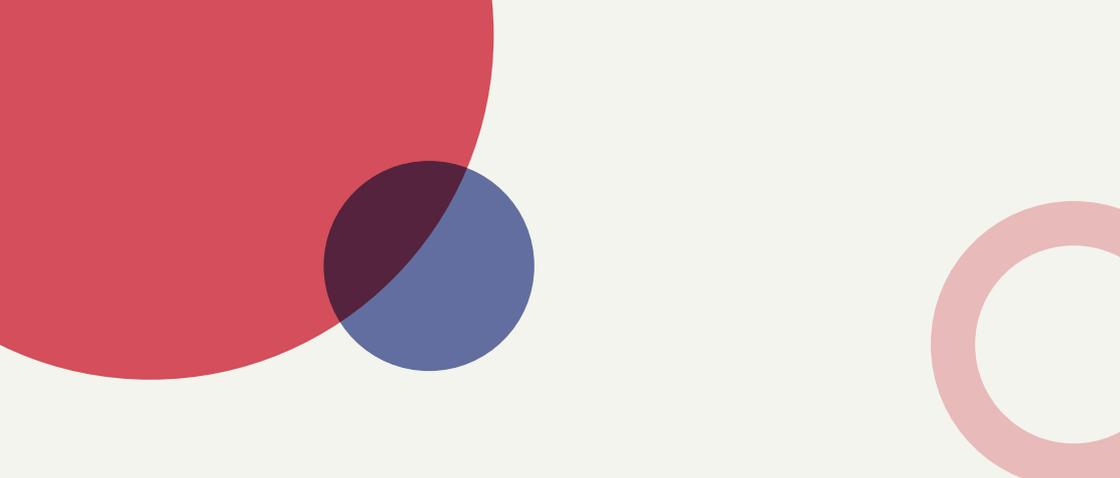
This booklet includes:

- Places to write down information you receive from hospital staff so that it can be easily remembered.
- Common hospital terms and what they mean.
- Important information to support you in your caring role.
- Useful contacts for services and supports for both you and the person you care for.

Funded by



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**



Welcome, we are here for you!

Carers WA understands that a hospital stay is a stressful time and your main concern is for the person you support.

As well as talking with the hospital staff, you can call Carers WA's dedicated Carer Gateway team on **1800 422 737** to talk through your caring situation. You may be caring for your parent, friend, cousin, sibling, neighbour, child, grandparent or any number or combination of friends or family. Maybe you also have your own health needs and are not sure where to turn? Whatever your situation, we are here, just for you!

Am I a "carer"?

Family members or friends who provide ongoing care or support to a family member or friend, often do not think of themselves as being a "carer" for that person. It is usually something you see yourself doing naturally as part of your relationship. However, when you are in a caring role for someone who has ongoing disability or health and/or mental health challenges, you may also be referred to as a "carer" for that person. This is to recognise the significant role you have in the life of the person you care for when they require extra support.

About this booklet

This booklet is designed to be used during this hospital admission and the period after discharge. If the person you care for is admitted to hospital regularly, you may want to bring this copy back into hospital with you, so you have information from the most recent admission. Alternatively, if you would like a new copy for each admission that is fine too. Sometimes there are several people caring for the same person, so if you share the caring role with others, you can each have a booklet.

This booklet is also available online, please see website for details:

www.carerswa.asn.au

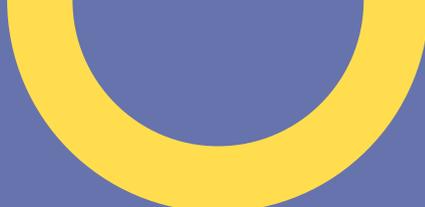
My name: _____

Name of the person I care for:

Hospital: _____

Admission date: _____

Discharge date: _____



Disclaimer

The information in this booklet is current at time of print. If any of the services mentioned in here are no longer available, please call Carers WA's Carer Gateway team on 1800 422 737 and we can put you in touch with the services you require. Please note this booklet is for carers living in Western Australia.

Whilst all effort has been made to provide correct details, Carers WA is not liable for any outcomes as a result of using this booklet. If you have any queries regarding your own health or the health of the person you care for, please seek medical advice. This booklet is not to replace medical advice. Some services will differ from hospital to hospital and in regional and remote hospitals/health services. If there are any services mentioned in this booklet that are not available in your area, please speak to the staff at the hospital you are visiting or call Carers WA's Carer Gateway team on 1800 422 737.

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It can be difficult to know what services are available to you and the person you care for.

Carers WA | Carer Services and Supports¹

Carers WA offers support services for you, as the person caring for your family member or friend. Types of support Carers WA can provide include:

- An opportunity to take a break from the caring role through a range of regular in-person and online support groups in metro and regional locations.
- Providing advice, information and resources to link carers to relevant services.
- Facilitating informative workshops and courses to assist carers to return to the workforce and increase their health and wellbeing.
- Advocating for improved services and supports for carers by addressing carer issues at a state and federal level and providing training for carers to participate in government committees and to use their lived experience to represent the voice of carers in the community.
- Providing support to young carers through community education, one-on-one needs assessment, peer support toolkits and young carer events and activities.

For more information call Carers WA on 1300 227 377 (8.30am-4.30pm) or visit www.carerswa.asn.au

¹ Carers WA, Our Services [website], <https://www.carerswa.asn.au/our-services/> (accessed 28 May 2021)

Carer Gateway²

An Australian Government initiative providing a mix of free in-person, phone, and online supports, services and advice for family carers in Australia. Carers WA is leading the delivery of in-person services in WA, in partnership with HelpingMinds.

Carer Gateway staff can provide information or develop a tailored personalised action plan with supports and services to alleviate areas of strain. These services may include peer support, counselling, funding for practical supports, or respite to have some time away from your caring role. Call **1800 422 737** (8.00am-5.00pm) or search **“Carer Gateway WA”**.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse carers

Interpreter Services

If you require an interpreter, please call the National Translating and Interpreting Service³ (TIS National) on **13 14 50**. Carers WA can organise interpreters to be available during services we offer by phone or in-person. It is possible to request either a male or female interpreter*.

**Whilst Carers WA and TIS make every effort to provide these services, they may be subject to availability.*

National Relay Service

TTY/voice calls: **133 677**

Speak and Listen: **1300 555 727**

Internet relay users: **relayservice.gov.au**

² Carers WA, Carer Gateway Services [website], <https://www.carerswa.asn.au/our-services/> (accessed 28 May 2021)

³ National Translating and Interpreting Service, Help and Support [website], <https://www.tisnational.gov.au/en/Help-using-TIS-National-services> (accessed 28 May 2021)

Information for carers in other languages

ISHAR Multicultural Women's Health Services⁴

ISHAR provides a range of inclusive, holistic and culturally sensitive services for women from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds.

ISHAR provides three service streams of women's health, family support and carer support programs. Interpreters are available for all services. Contact **(08) 9345 5335** or visit **www.ishar.org.au**

Department of Health

Visit the HealthyWA website to view health related translated resources: **www.healthywa.wa.gov.au**

Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre (EDAC)⁵

EDAC is the peak advocacy organisation in WA for rights of ethnic people with disabilities and their families. They provide support for people with all types of disability including physical, sensory, intellectual and psychiatric conditions. EDAC can advocate within the realms of healthcare. Contact (Freecall) **1800 659 921** or visit **www.edac.org.au**

4 ISHAR, About Us [website], <https://www.ishar.org.au/about> (accessed 28 May 2021)

5 Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre, Our Services [website], http://www.edac.org.au/?page_id=34 (accessed 28 May 2021)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family support person/carers

Aboriginal Health Liaison Officers/Staff

Aboriginal Health Liaison Officers (AHLOs) provide a liaison service for Aboriginal people and hospital services.

AHLOs can assist you with the following:

- Visiting the person you care for in hospital.
- Supporting you and the person you care for while in hospital in a culturally appropriate way.
- Navigating the hospital setting.
- Contacting family and friends.
- Linking Aboriginal patients for follow-up care after discharge.

Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service

Derbarl Yerrigan has an Aboriginal Liaison Service which includes direct contact with clients and families, assisting them in the smooth transition to and from hospital, follow-up care on discharge, ongoing specialist appointments and providing transport where necessary. Contact **(08) 9421 3888** or visit **www.dyhs.org.au**.

Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA)⁶

AHCWA support the development of Aboriginal community-controlled health services, health policy and advocates for Aboriginal community development. They aim to build the capacity of the health workforce to improve social, emotional and general health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people. Contact **(08) 9227 1631** or visit **www.ahcwa.org.au**.

⁶ Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia, About Us [website], <https://www.ahcwa.org.au/about> (accessed 28 May 2021)

Rural and remote area carers

Rural and remote areas do not always have the same range of resources that are available in the city or large regional centres. To find out what your local hospital can offer, ask the nursing staff on the ward at that hospital. If you are not in hospital and you want more information, you can ask your GP or call the hospital. If you require further assistance, contact the Carers WA Carer Gateway team on **1800 422 737**.

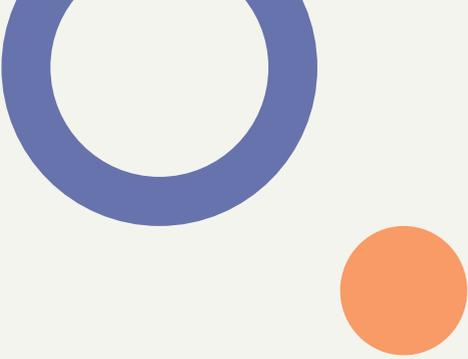
Patient Assisted Travel Scheme⁷

The Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS) provides a subsidy towards travel and where applicable, an accommodation subsidy to assist permanent country residents (and where eligible their escorts). For more information contact your GP or visit **www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/index.php?id=pats**

The following groups of people are eligible for PATS:

- Permanent residents of country WA and eligible for Medicare.
- Country patients needing to travel more than 100kms (one way) to access nearest eligible specialist service. To access specialist medical treatment for dialysis or cancer the travel criteria is 70 – 100 kms (one way).
- PATS is a subsidy scheme and does not cover all costs associated with travel and accommodation. If the specialist service you need is available locally or able to be conducted via Telehealth, PATS assistance may be declined.

⁷ Government of Western Australia, WA Country Health Service (WACHS), The Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS) [website], <http://www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/index.php?id=pats> (accessed 28 May 2021)



Telehealth⁸

Telehealth is a state-wide network of video conferencing that allows people to access health care in their own town or shire.

Some of the services offered by Telehealth:

- Mental Health Services
- Emergency Telehealth Service (injury, respiratory, digestive, circulatory, skin)
- Inpatient Services (respiratory, injury, skin, circulatory, digestive)
- Outpatient Services (plastic surgery, Orthopaedics, Haematology, Gastroenterology, respiratory medicine).

For more information and to access these services please contact your regional hospital or family GP or call **1300 367 166**.

Regional hospital services

Hospitals in rural and remote areas offer a variety of allied health and outpatient services. These services differ in each area, so please contact your local hospital to see what they provide.

⁸ Government of Western Australia, WA Country Health Service (WACHS), Telehealth [website], <http://www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/index.php?id=telehealth> (accessed 28 May 2021)

Information about the person requiring care

The information you know about the person you care for is valuable to the hospital staff. You can let the staff know what is “normal” for the person you care for and can often alert staff to small changes that may indicate that something is wrong. It has been shown that when staff work in partnership with patients, families and carers there are multiple benefits, including an improved patient experience, reduced time in hospital and a reduction in unplanned events.⁹

Emergency and other contacts

If you are not able to provide care due to your own ill health or other circumstances, list below who can provide back-up support for the person you care for.

Type	Name	Contact
Emergency Contact 1		
Emergency Contact 2		

Other important contacts	Name	Contact
General Practitioner (GP)		
Community Pharmacist		

⁹ Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, The NSQHS Standards [website], <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/standards>, (accessed 28 May 2021)

Health history of the person you care for

Rather than having to repeat the health history of the person you care for every time you are asked, if you record it here, you can simply show this information to the hospital staff when they ask you.

Date of Birth: _____

Allergies: _____

Past medical history

Diagnosis	When Diagnosed	Doctor/Hospital

Other Notes:

Medical procedures

Procedures	Date	Doctor/Hospital

Special dietary/cultural or other considerations

Please inform hospital staff if there are any special likes, dislikes or routines of the person you care for. This will assist the staff in providing appropriate care.

You may wish to note them down here:



Other information

Health care item	Y/N	Type/Card No.	Location
Medicare Card			
Healthcare Card			
Pension/Benefit (1)			
Pension/Benefit (2)			
Private Health Fund			
Advance Health Directive			
Guardianship or Enduring Guardianship			
Power of Attorney (POA) or Enduring POA			
Will			
Medic-Alert			



Hospital admission

Information I need to know

When the person you care for is admitted to hospital you may be speaking to several different hospital staff. A hospital admission can be a stressful time not only for the person you are supporting but also for yourself.

Patient and Consumer Centred Care¹⁰

Patient or Person Centred Care promotes a respectful, and individualised approach to the planning and delivery of care within the health care setting. The care delivered should be respectful of the patient's beliefs and values, together with their comfort and surroundings.

The planning and delivery of care should not only include the patient but also their carer, family and other supporters. The Carers Recognition Act (2004) legislation represents carers across the public health sector. Please refer to page 55 for more information.

Visiting Hours

Monday-Friday	Saturday-Sunday	Rest Period

¹⁰ Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare, Person-centred care [website], <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/partnering-consumers/person-centred-care> (accessed 28 May 2021)

Hospital main number: _____

Ward or area name: _____ **Direct line:** _____

Ward or area name: _____ **Direct line:** _____

Medical/Nursing staff

Doctors and nurses rotate through 2-3 shifts per day and will do a handover to other staff at a change of shift; this is also called a shift handover or clinical handover, depending on where it is done.

Doctors will also see the person you care for during a ward round. This may be a combination of doctors or just one and they may have the nursing shift coordinator with them to provide input and record any changes to the care, treatment or discharge plan.

Ward round and handover

As the patient's carer, if you are present at the time of staff doing a bedside ward round or handover, this is an opportunity to discuss information you have regarding the patient.

This could include the person's usual condition and any factors you are aware of that hospital staff should consider, to prevent any unwanted outcomes for the patient.

Consent

If the patient agrees, it is appropriate for you to be present during the handover; if the patient does not agree, you may be asked to leave. If the patient does not have the capacity



to make this decision, as the patient's carer you should be included in any decision-making that will have an impact on your caring role (see Carers Recognition Act (2004) and Carers Charter).

However, if the handover/ward round includes sharing confidential information or providing legal consent, you would also need to have a relationship with the patient or legal guardianship that would allow you to do this as well as the patient giving their consent (if applicable). If you are not comfortable discussing information about your caring role or regarding the person you care for in their presence, you may ask to speak with hospital staff away from the patient.

Family meeting

You or the staff can initiate a special meeting (often called a family meeting) if there are complex decisions to be made. This allows all the relevant health care team members to come together with you (with or without other family members/significant others and the patient depending on the circumstances) to discuss all aspects of the situation before making any decisions or planning.

It can be hard to remember information when you are under stress. If you write things down as you go along, it will make it easier to look back and find information that you may need later.

Hospital staff	Name	Other information
Consultant/ Specialist/Doctor		
Registrar Doctor		
Intern/Junior Medical Officer/ Doctor		
Clinical Nurse Specialist or Manager		

Condition/diagnosis for this admission/procedure:

Information from the medical/nursing team

Date	Name



My questions

Often, we think of questions we would like to ask when we are at home or during other moments. To help you remember them, write them down as they come to you and note the answer below.

Question: _____

Answer: _____

By: _____ **Date:** _____

Question: _____

Answer: _____

By: _____ **Date:** _____

Question: _____

Answer: _____

By: _____ **Date:** _____

Medications

Types of medications¹¹

- A medication is NOT always prescribed, it MAY be herbal medicine, vitamins, minerals or nutritional supplements. It may be in the form of an inhaler, cream, patch, injection, tablet or capsule.
- You may get medicines from doctors, nurses, pharmacists, homeopaths, naturopaths or herbalists.
- You may choose medicines yourself at a pharmacy, chemist, health food store or supermarket.

It is important to inform the doctor and/or pharmacist about any medications that the patient is taking and if they have had an allergic reaction to any medication in the past, for example, a rash. Bring in any medications the person you care for takes in their original containers or dispensing pack if possible, including non-prescription medications.

What is a generic medication?¹²

Many medications are available as different brands. They all contain the same active ingredient; however, they may be packaged differently or may look different. The active ingredient is the chemical that makes the medicine work. The pharmacist may offer you or the person you care for an alternative brand to the one that the doctor has prescribed. It is your choice as to which you prefer to use.

11 Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare, Medication safety [website], <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/medication-safety> (accessed 28 May 2021)

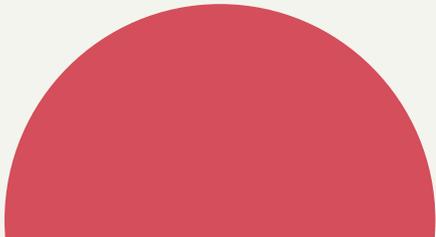
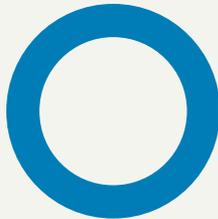
12 NPS Medicine Wise, Information for Consumers and Carers [website], <https://www.nps.org.au/consumers> (accessed 28 May 2021)

Considerations

If there are special considerations in relation to taking or using any medications, you can request a print-out of instructions from the hospital or community pharmacist which you can keep in the back pocket of this book along with your discharge medication list.

This is safer than writing it down in your own words just in case you did not quite hear or understand the instructions correctly. If the GP changes any medications after leaving hospital, ask your community pharmacist for an updated list to replace this one.

You may be asked by the doctor if the person you care for drinks alcohol or takes recreational or illegal/illicit drugs. This is confidential information and knowing this information may prevent reactions to treatment/s or other medications provided in the hospital.



Planning for leaving hospital

My questions for the doctor or pharmacist

- What does the medicine do?
- When should the medication be taken?
- How long should it be used for?
- Does this medication need to be taken with anything or at a certain time?
- Are there any side effects, or should the person I care for expect to feel any different while using this medicine?
- Will this medication interact with any other medications?
- Is there anything that might affect the way this medication works (e.g., food, drinks, storage)?
- What should I do if a dose is missed?
- Using medications is a problem for me or for the person I care for due to sight/swallowing/strength/memory. How can you help me with this?
- What is the best way for me to dispose of old medication?

Notes: _____

What about YOU?

Your own health and mental health are important. Being in a caring role may, for some people, bring feelings of stress, guilt or loss. It is important to acknowledge these feelings and speaking with someone may be beneficial. You may want to use the time while the person you care for is in hospital to get the extra support that you need, either by asking to speak to a social worker or contacting Carers WA's Carer Gateway team. Consider if you need to catch up on some of your own appointments. Maintaining your own health and wellbeing is an important part of sustaining your caring role.

Taking a break

You have a choice as to whether you spend time with the person you care for when they are in hospital, or you may want to use this time to take a break.

You can also use this time to plan ahead how you can take regular breaks following discharge from hospital.

Some simple ideas to take a break:



Catch up with
a friend



Watch a movie



Go for a walk



Read a good
book



Listen to music



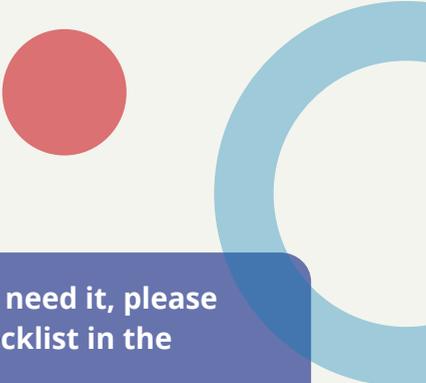
Make some time
for yourself

Leaving hospital

Before the person you care for leaves hospital, there should be a discharge plan worked out. If they can, the person you care for should be involved in developing this plan. This is called shared decision-making.

Shared decision-making involves bringing together a patient's values, goals and concerns with the best available evidence about benefits, risks and uncertainties of treatment, to achieve appropriate health care decisions. It involves clinicians and patients (and carers where appropriate) making decisions about the patient's management together.

Carers should also be involved in any decision-making that may impact on their caring role as per the Carers Recognition Act (2004) and Carers Charter (see page 55 of this book). The only time this would not occur is if the person you care for does not consent (if they can) to you receiving information about their condition or care requirements.



To make it easy to find when you need it, please place the following discharge checklist in the pocket at the back of this book.

Checklist before leaving hospital

- Has the medication been supplied for the person you care for?
- Have you/the person you care for received a copy of the discharge medication list?
- If there are any medications that have been stopped, have these been disposed of safely?
- Have services for the person you care for been organised to start after discharge?
- Has any equipment you need to provide care for the patient, or for the patient, been organised prior to leaving hospital?
- Have you/the person you care for received a copy of the discharge summary (this also gets sent to the patient's GP)?
- Is a follow-up appointment with a GP required? If so, hospital staff should advise you as to how soon the person you care for needs to see the GP.
- Have you thought about how you may take some time out for yourself, to take a break?
- Are there any family members or friends you can call on for help should you need it?
- Does the person you care for have any follow up appointments you need to write down or have you/the person you care for been given their appointment cards?
- Have you registered with Carer Gateway to receive ongoing support and advice? If not, call **1800 422 737**.

Planning for after hospital

Type of care/ support	What needs to be done?	How often or when?	Resources/Who? (e.g. equipment, support required)
Example: Mum - rehab appointments	Example: Go to Fremantle Hospital Physio	Example: Every week for 12 weeks starting Friday	Example: Hospital transport organised

After hospital

Once you leave hospital the person you care for has their health managed by a General Practitioner (GP). The GP should be sent a discharge summary from the hospital. If the person you care for does not have a regular GP, you may be asked to take a copy of the discharge summary from the hospital with you to the GP you see after leaving hospital. They may also be referred to specialist outpatient appointments at the hospital or in the community.

What if the person I care for does not, or will not be living with me after leaving hospital?

The person you care for may have already been living in supported accommodation (e.g., an aged care facility, hostel, or group home) or did not live with you (e.g., lives with a relative, friend or neighbour) before they came into hospital. If, following discharge from hospital, they are not able to return to their home and are moving into supported accommodation this does not mean your caring role ceases. In fact, you are often still providing, arranging, or managing care for someone who does not live with you.

It is still important to acknowledge your caring role and to ensure you seek out support for yourself. If this is the first time the person you care for is going to be living apart from you following leaving hospital you may experience feelings of loss, guilt, and grief. If you would like to discuss this further or talk to someone about how you are feeling, please call Carers WA's Carer Gateway team on **1800 422 737**.

Support services at home

You may be in a situation where the person you care for requires extra help with daily activities such as showering, transport, cleaning, and shopping. While paid support staff may be providing this help a few hours a week, it is important to remember that you are still in a caring role and have access to Carers WA services.

Community services

Please be aware that depending on where you live not all the following services may be available. Also note, certain eligibility criteria may apply for these services.

When the person you care for is discharged from hospital, there may be services available to assist with things such as nursing care, personal care, shopping, transport, taking a break and housekeeping. If the person you are caring for is still in hospital, you can talk to the doctor, nurse, a social worker, or discharge planner about services available.

If the person you care for has already left hospital, please discuss options with your GP or call Carer Gateway on **1800 422 737** for more information. If you have any issues in accessing services e.g., long waiting times before you can have services provided, feel free to call the agency providing care and if you still have issues regarding the impact this has on your caring role, contact the number above.

What home and community supports are available?

The Commonwealth Home Support Program¹³ in WA (CHSP) provides basic support services to some older people, people with a disability and their carers, to assist them to continue living independently at home. You may be eligible for CHSP if you are older and frail and have difficulty with everyday tasks, if you have a disability or if you are a carer of a frail older person or someone with a disability.

If you or the person you care for is under 65 with a disability, check for your local National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider. The person requiring support will need to check their eligibility for funding and supports under this Scheme instead of CHSP. For more information, see Disability/National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in the Useful Contacts section of this book.

CHSP services include:

- Support to participate in social activity in a group or one-on-one.
- Assistance with everyday household tasks.
- Assistance to enhance nutrition, function, strength, independence and safety.
- Assistance to support independence in personal care activities such as showering and dressing.
- Assistance to keep up with essential activities such as shopping, banking and maintaining social contacts.

¹³ Australian Government, My Aged Care, Commonwealth Home Support Program [website], <https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/help-at-home/commonwealth-home-support-programme> (accessed 28 May 2021)

For further information contact My Aged Care on **1800 200 422**. You do not need a referral. The CHSP program seeks a contribution from clients toward the cost of the support services provided that is fair and affordable; this contribution may be means tested.

Transport

Patient Transport Services

Patient Transport Services may provide some non-emergency transport for people attending hospital appointments. Please speak with either the hospital social worker, your treating team or outpatient clinic staff for more information. If you want to book transport prior to the person you care for being admitted to the hospital, please phone the hospital and ask to speak with the Patient Transport Department.

Local council/shire transport

Many local council/shire offices provide transport for people to access hospital appointments.

Carer Respite

Respite helps carers find a balance between caring for others and caring for themselves.

What is respite?

Respite is when carers are given the opportunity of a break from their usual caring role and duties. The tasks associated with their caring role are temporarily provided by someone else.

Respite provides time out for both carers and the person they care for.

Organising respite

Respite for people with care needs can be organised through My Aged Care if the person is aged 65 or over. Alternatively, through the NDIS if the person has a disability and can get an NDIS package.

Visit:

My Aged Care

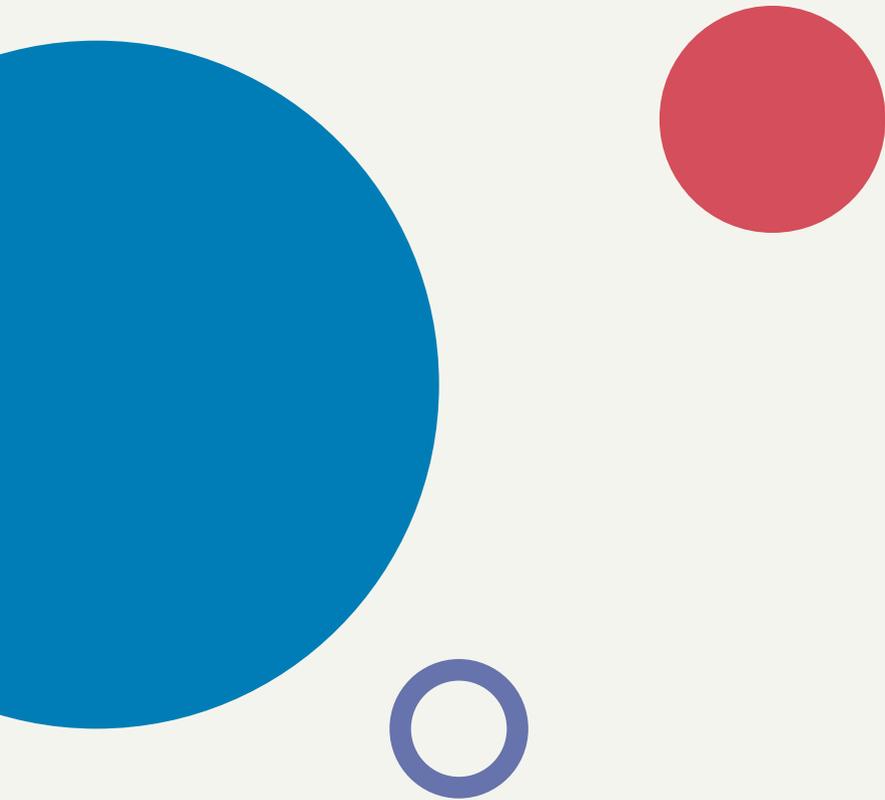
www.myagedcare.gov.au or call 1800 200 422
(Monday to Friday 8.00am - 8.00pm and
Saturday 10.00am - 2.00pm).

NDIS

www.ndis.gov.au or call 1800 800 110
(Monday to Friday 8.00am – 8.00pm)

Some funding for respite for carers may be available through Carer Gateway as either emergency respite or planned respite, depending on eligibility criteria. This will be ascertained during the intake process.

Call **1800 422 737** or search **“Carer Gateway WA”**.



Useful Contacts

This list will provide you with some information about supports and services available to you and where to find them. Carers WA and the Carer Gateway can help you with any questions you may have, provide you with referrals, and can be contacted on **1800 422 737**.

Carer Services

Carer Gateway

1800 422 737

www.carergateway.gov.au

Carer Gateway is an Australian Government initiative providing a mix of free online, telephone and in-person support services and advice for family carers.

Carers WA is leading the delivery of these in-person services, in partnership with HelpingMinds.

Carers WA

1300 227 377

www.carerswa.asn.au

The peak body for family and friend carers in WA. Carers WA provides a range of innovative practical and emotional support services.

Emergency Contacts

**Ambulance, Fire,
Police**

For emergencies call 000.

Emergency Contacts

Crisis Care
1800 199 008

Crisis Care provides telephone information and referrals for people experiencing crisis. Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Kids Helpline
Free call:
1800 551 800
www.kidshelp.com.au

If the person you care for requires urgent care because you are unable to, you can ring this free call number. Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Lifeline
13 11 14
www.lifeline.org.au

Lifeline connects people with care by providing services in suicide prevention, crisis support and mental health support. Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Chat online 7.00pm - 12.00pm AEST.

**Mental Health
Emergency Response
Line (MHERL)**
Metropolitan:
1300 555 788
Rural: 1800 676 822

Psychiatric emergency assessment and advisory service to assist mental health clients and their carers. Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Emergency Contacts

Poisons Information Centre

13 11 26
www.scgh.health.
wa.gov.au/
OurServices/WAPIC/
index.html

A telephone service line for all areas, all hours. Provides consultation regarding poisoning. This includes prescription/non-prescription medication, household and industrial chemicals, plants, animal/insect bites, pesticides and other agricultural products. Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Samaritans

24/7 Crisis Line:
13 52 47
24/7 Youth Line:
Free call 1800 198 313
Office:
(08) 9381 5725
www.samaritans.org

The Samaritans Crisis Line is a WA based, not for profit organisation with services available both locally and nationally. The crisis line provides anonymous, non-judgemental, non-religious emotional support from appropriately trained individuals. Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

A - Z of Useful Contacts

Aged Care

My Aged Care

Department of Health
1800 200 422
www.myagedcare.gov.au

My Aged Care is your one-stop-shop for aged care services and information in Australia.

Advocacy

Advocare

(08) 9479 7566
Free call 1800 655 566
(Country Callers)
Elder Abuse Helpline:
1300 724 679

Advocare provides a free, professional advocacy service for older Western Australians to understand their rights, resolve any issues with aged and community care service provision and access the right supports.

Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre (EDAC)

(08) 9388 7455 or
1800 659 921
www.edac.org.au

Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre (EDAC) is the peak advocacy organisation for people with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in WA.

Advocacy

<p>Explorability Inc. (08) 6361 6001 1800 290 690 www.explorability.org.au</p>	<p>Provides a specialist advocacy service for people with a disability, their families and carers in Western Australia.</p>
<p>Health Consumers' Council (08) 9221 3422 Free call 1800 620 780 www.hconc.org.au</p>	<p>The Health Consumers' Council (HCC) is an independent community-based organisation, representing the consumers' voice in health policy, planning, research and service delivery.</p>
<p>Mental Health Advocacy Service (08) 6234 6300 Free call 1800 999 075 www.mhas.wa.gov.au</p>	<p>A free, independent service, helping people with mental health issues know and protect their rights.</p>
<p>People with Disability WA (PWDWA) (08) 9420 7279 Country Callers 1800 193 331 www.pwdwa.org</p>	<p>PWDWA provides non-legal advocacy to people with disabilities who have serious or urgent problems.</p>

Counselling

HelpingMinds

Metro (08) 9427 7100
Regional free call
1800 811 747
www.helpingminds.org.au

HelpingMinds offers support and services to children, youth, adults and families caring for someone with a mental illness.

Community services and supports

Alzheimer's WA

1300 66 77 88
www.alzheimerswa.org.au

Alzheimer's WA provides a range of social support and engagement opportunities for people living with dementia and their carers.

ConnectGroups

(08) 9364 6909
www.connectgroups.org.au

ConnectGroups/Support Groups Association WA Inc. is the peak body for self-help and support groups across the state.

Commonwealth Home Support Program

1800 200 422
www.myagedcare.gov.au/help-home/commonwealth-home-support-program

The Commonwealth Home Support Program provides services for some older people and their carers to assist them to continue to live independently at home.

Complaints

Advocare	See contacts under Advocacy.
Care Opinion info@careopinion.org.au www.careopinion.org.au	A public voice to share your experiences of Australian Health and Care services, good or bad. They pass your stories on to the right people to try and make a difference.
Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (08) 6551 7600 1800 813 583 TTY: (08) 551 7640 www.hadsco.wa.gov.au	The Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO) is an independent statutory authority providing an impartial resolution service for complaints relating to health or disability services provided in Western Australia.
Ombudsman Western Australia (08) 9220 7555 Free call 1800 117 000 www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au	The Ombudsman investigates complaints about Western Australian public authorities including state government agencies, statutory authorities, local governments and public universities.

Culturally and linguistically diverse information

**Ethnic Disability
Advocacy Centre (EDAC)**

See contacts under
Advocacy.

**Umbrella Multicultural
Community Care**
(08) 9275 8893
www.umbrella
communitycare.com.au

Culturally appropriate aged
care services for seniors in
the community.

Disability

**Companion Card
Program**
Free call 1800 617 337
TTY: (08) 9443 3107
wacompanioncard@nds.
org.au

The Companion Card is a tool to assist organisations and businesses that charge an admission or participation fee to comply with existing anti-discrimination legislation. The Companion Card is issued to people with a significant, permanent disability, who can demonstrate that they are unable to access most community activities and venues without attendant care support.

Disability

<p>Department of Communities – Disability Services (08) 9222 4580 access@communities.wa.gov.au</p>	<p>The Disability Services offer support to individuals, families and carers through providing services, funding and information.</p>
<p>Explorability Inc.</p>	<p>See contacts under Advocacy.</p>
<p>Kalparrin (08) 6456 0035 kalparrinwa@health.wa.gov.au www.kalparrin.org.au</p>	<p>Supporting family members and carers of a child with a disability or special need.</p>
<p>National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Free call 1800 800 110 TTY: 1800 555 677 www.ndis.gov.au</p>	<p>The National Disability Insurance Scheme was initiated by the Australian Government for Australians with a disability, including people with intellectual, physical, sensory and psychosocial disabilities.</p>

Drug and alcohol services

Alcohol and Drug Support Line

(08) 9442 5000
Free call 1800 198 024

Professional support funded by the Mental Health Commission. Operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Drug and Alcohol Withdrawal Network (DAWN)

(08) 9388 5000
dawn@sjog.org.au
www.sjog.org.au

Assists people to reduce or stop their substance abuse by providing care or support at home.

Next Step Drug and Alcohol Services

(08) 9219 1919

Next Step Drug and Alcohol Services provide a range of treatment services for people experiencing problems associated with their alcohol and other drug use, as well as support for families.

Parent and Family Drug Support Line

(08) 9442 5050
Free call 1800 653 203

Anyone concerned about a loved one's drug use can call. This Mental Health Commission funded service which provides confidential, anonymous professional and peer support.

Drug and alcohol services

Wungening Aboriginal Corporation
(08) 9221 1411
www.wungening.com.au

Provides holistic and culturally appropriate programs to assist with the treatment and prevention of alcohol and drug misuse amongst Aboriginal people.

Equipment

Indigo (formerly Independent Living Centre)
(08) 9381 0600
www.indigosolutions.org.au

Indigo provides information and advice, assessment, funding and hire services. This enables Western Australians of all ages and abilities to live more independent and fulfilling lives.

Financial support/legal advice

**Services Australia
(Centrelink/Medicare)**
13 27 17 (Disability,
Sickness and Carers line)
www.servicesaustralia.gov.au

A Government Agency providing financial assistance to eligible carers. This includes the Carers Allowance and Carers Payment. **Eligibility criteria applies.*

Centrelink has a Social Worker for carers who you may request to speak to (phone 13 28 50).

**Mental Health Law
Centre**
(08) 9328 8012
Free call 1800 620
www.mhlcwa.org.au

Mental Health Law Centre provides legal advice and representation to people who are involuntary patients in the mental health system. They may also be able to assist with other legal problems but only if the problem relates directly to mental illness.

Financial support/legal advice

Office of the Public Advocate

1300 858 455
(08) 9278 7300
Level 2, International House, 26 St Georges Terrace, Perth WA
www.publicadvocate.wa.gov.au

The Office of the Public Advocate provides information and advice on guardianship, administration, Enduring Power of Attorney, Enduring Power of Guardianship and protecting vulnerable adults.

Public Trustee

1300 746 116
553 Hay Street, Perth WA
public.trustee@justice.wa.gov.au
www.publictrustee.wa.gov.au

The Public Trustee offers independent, professional trustee and asset management services to the WA community.

These include Will and EPA drafting, deceased estate administration, executor support, financial administration and trust management services.

Interpreter/translation services

Auslan Interpreter Service

1300 287 526
admin@auslanservices.com
www.auslanservices.com

Auslan Interpreter Service is a national service that provides interpreters for hearing-impaired patients and carers.

National Relay Service

Voice 1800 555 660
TTY 1800 555 630
helpdesk@relayservice.com.au
www.relayservice.com.au

A phone solution for people who are deaf or who have a hearing or speech impediment.

Translating and Interpreting Services

13 14 50
www.tisnational.gov.au

Provides translation and interpretation to assist with accessing health services. If you or the person you care for requires an interpreter, please call TIS, they can contact who you need to speak to while you are on the phone.

Medical Advice

Healthdirect Australia
Free call 1800 022 222
www.healthdirect.org.au

24 hours a day, 7 days a week health information and advice service.

Medication

NPS MedicineWise
Medicines Line:
1300 633 424
www.nps.org.au

NPS is an independent, not-for-profit organisation funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

NPS provides useful tools and information about medicines, conditions and medical tests to help Australians make better health choices.

Poisons Information Centre
13 11 26

See under emergency contacts.

Mental health

HelpingMinds	See contacts under Counselling.
Mental Health Advocacy Service (08) 6234 6300 Free call 1800 999 057 www.mhas.org.au	A free independent service helping people with mental health illness know and protect their rights. They provide information and advocacy.
Mental Health Emergency Response Line (MHERL)	See under emergency contacts.
Mental Health Law Centre (MHLC) (08) 9328 8012 Free call 1800 620 285 www.mhlcwa.org.au TTY: 1800 720 101	See under financial help/legal advice.
Mental Illness Fellowship of Western Australia (MIFWA) (08) 9237 8900 www.mifwa.org.au info@mifwa.org.au	They offer comprehensive information and support services to people with mental illness, their carers, families and friends.

Mental health

Office of the Chief Psychiatrist

(08) 6553 0000
reception@ocp.
wa.gov.au

The key functions of the Chief Psychiatrist are legislative responsibilities, expert advice and medications.

Richmond Wellbeing

1800 742 466
www.rw.org.au

Richmond Wellbeing provides accommodation and support services to people with a diagnosable mental illness and carer support.

Palliative Care

Palliative Care WA

1300 551 704
www.palliativecarewa.
asn.au

Palliative Care WA is the peak body for the palliative care sector in WA. They work for the community and with the palliative care, aged care and community services sectors to ensure access to quality palliative care services for all Western Australians.

Transport/parking

Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS)

Please contact your local hospital and ask to speak to the PATS officer or your GP for further information.

www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au

The Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS) provides a subsidy towards the cost of travel and accommodation for eligible permanent country residents, and their approved escorts, who are required to travel a long distance to access certain categories of specialist medical services (including Telehealth).

St John Ambulance

Non-emergency number:

(08) 9334 1222

www.stjohnwa.com.au

The St John's non-emergency number can be used to make a booking for an ambulance transfer or for non-emergency situations. In an emergency always call 000.

Taxi User Subsidy Scheme

1300 660 147

(08) 9216 8109

www.transport.wa.gov.au

The Taxi User Subsidy Scheme provides taxi travel at a reduced rate for people who have a disability that will prevent them using conventional public transport services.



The Carers Recognition Act (2004) and Carers Charter¹⁴

Introduction

The Carers Recognition Act (2004) came into effect on the 1st January 2005 and is an important step in supporting the crucial and often complex role of carers.

The Act is aimed at changing the culture of service providers so that the impact on carers is considered when services are assessed, planned, delivered and reviewed.

A key part of the Act requires service providers to comply with the Western Australian Carers Charter. The Charter provides clear direction on how carers are to be treated and how carers are to be involved in the delivery of services.

Background

This legislation was developed in response to calls by carers for greater recognition and consideration by service providers.

In passing the Carers Recognition Act (2004), the Western Australian government is acknowledging the estimated 230,000 carers in Western Australia who provide informal or unpaid care to family members, friends or neighbours. It was the first legislation of its type in Australia.

¹⁴ Government of Western Australia, Department of Communities, Carers Recognition Act 2004 [website], <https://dlgc.communities.wa.gov.au/Publications/Pages/Carers-Recognition-Act-2004.aspx> (accessed 28 May 2021)

What does the Carers Recognition Act (2004) mean for carers?

- This legislation formally recognises carers as key partners in the delivery of care.
- It provides a means for carers to be involved in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services that impact on them and the caring role.
- It allows carers to make a complaint about how they are treated and involved in decision making processes.

Carers Charter

1. Carers must be treated with respect and dignity.
2. The role of carers must be recognised by including carers in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services that impact on them and the role of carers.
3. The views and needs of carers must be considered along with the views, needs and best interests of people receiving care when decisions are made that impact on carers and the role of carers.
4. Complaints made by carers in relation to services that impact on them and the role of carers must be given due attention and consideration.



Carers WA

Carers WA is a non-profit, community-based organisation and registered charity dedicated to improving the lives of family carers in Western Australia. Part of the National Network of Carers Associations, Carers WA is the peak body recognised by government as the voice of family carers.



Phone

1300 227 377



Email

info@carerswa.asn.au



Website

www.carerswa.asn.au

Search "Carers WA"



Translating and Interpreting Services

13 14 50 (24 hours, 7 days)



An Australian Government Initiative



24-hour relay call numbers:

TTY/voice calls	133 677
Speak and Listen	1300 555 727
SMS relay	0423 677 767