



Designated Carer & Principal Care Provider



Canterbury Community Health Centre

Canterbury Hospital
Thorncraft Parade
Campsie NSW 2194
Phone 9787 0600

Croydon Community Health Centre

24 Liverpool Road
Croydon NSW 2132
Phone 9378 1100

Camperdown Community Health Centre

King George V Building
67-79 Missenden Road
Camperdown NSW 2050
Phone 9515 9000

Marrickville Community Health Centre

155 Livingstone Road
Marrickville NSW 2204
Phone 9562 0500

Redfern Community Health Centre

103-105 Redfern Street
Redfern NSW 2016
Phone 9395 0444

NSW Mental Health Act 2015

The Mental Health Act 2007 (the Act) was changed in 2015 after a major review. These changes help to promote the consumers views and wishes about their treatment. The Act strengthens the role of carers and the importance of involving carers in treatment and recovery.

This information sheet will describe some of these changes related to being a Designated Carer or Principal Care Provider.

A Designated Carer is a person who knows the consumer well, and is an ongoing support but does not necessarily provide day to day support.

A consumer can nominate up to two designated carers unless they are under the age of 15 or under the Guardianship Act 1987, then the Act makes their designated carer their parent or Guardian. If the health care team believes the nomination will put the carer or consumer at risk, they can withdraw the nomination and must tell the consumer and carer why.

A Principal Care Provider is a person primarily responsible for providing day to day support or care to the consumer, but not as a paid position. A principal care provider can be nominated by the consumers health care team, but not if the consumer has excluded that person from being given information.

As a **Designated Carer** or **Principal Care Provider** you have the right to:

- ⇒ Be consulted about discharge planning and leave
- ⇒ Be informed of Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT) hearings
- ⇒ Be given information about the consumer's care and treatment
- ⇒ Provide your views about the consumer to the treating team, and have this information considered in decisions about care

As a **Designated Carer** or **Principal Care Provider** you should be notified if the person you care for:

- ⇒ Is absent without permission or has not returned from leave
- ⇒ Is to be transferred to another mental health facility or unit
- ⇒ Is reclassified as a voluntary patient
- ⇒ Is detained or admitted as a voluntary patient

As a **Designated Carer** or **Principal Care Provider** you can request that:

- ⇒ The consumer be discharged into your care
- ⇒ The consumer be placed under a Community Treatment Order (CTO)
- ⇒ The consumer be admitted into a mental health facility
- ⇒ You receive information about medication being administered
- ⇒ An Official Visitor visits.

As a **Designated Carer** you should be notified when:

- * A CTO is being considered and an application is made to the MHRT
- * The consumer has been on a CTO and the order is being varied, revoked or no longer sought
- * Electro-convulsive therapy (ECT) is being considered and an application has been made to the MHRT
- * An application is made for consent for a surgical operation or a special medical treatment

What does being an excluded carer mean?

A consumer can nominate a Designated Carer. A consumer can also nominate persons who are to be excluded from being provided with information or consulted about their care.

If you are an excluded carer you can still provide information to the healthcare team, and you can still receive general healthcare information. General healthcare information refers to factual information that increases your understanding of mental health problems and treatment that is not specific to the person you care for.

There are limits to being excluded as a carer. These limits include if the exclusion puts a consumer or carer at risk, or that the consumer lacks capacity to make a decision to exclude someone at the time. In these situations the exclusion can be put on hold and reviewed when circumstances change.

Where can I get more support and information?

If you are unsure about what information can be shared with you please ask your clinician.

It can be very distressing to be excluded as a carer. Please talk to the team about your concerns if this happens and ask about accessing support from the Family Team or from One Door Mental Health.

One Door Mental Health delivers the Family and Carer Mental Health Support Service in SLHD. One Door provides individual and group support, information and advocacy. You can call them on 9708 2670, go to onedoor.org.au or ask your clinician to contact them on your behalf.

Below are some links to information, you can ask your treating team to print out any further information sheets you would like:

For more information on SLHD Mental Health Services, supports and options for care please go to slhd.nsw.gov.au/MentalHealth.

For further information on the Mental Health Act:

- ⇒ The NSW Health Education and Training site (HETI) provides practical information on the Mental Health Act at heti.nsw.gov.au.
- ⇒ The Mental Health Coordinating Council has an online guide to the legal and human rights of people navigating the mental health system at mhrm.mhcc.org.au.
- ⇒ The NSW Health website the NSW Mental Health Act (2007) - Guide Book (health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/resources/Pages/mhact-guidebook-2007.aspx)

Can I provide feedback on my experience of using the mental health service?

Yes! The Carer Experience of Service (CES) is your chance to tell us about your experiences of our mental health service. CES provides anonymous feedback on what we do well, and what we need to improve. Ask your clinician for a copy of CES or go to slhd.nsw.gov.au/MentalHealth to complete online.

