

# Services for Carers



**Merri** Community Health Services

## Services for Carers

Carers are family members and friends who look after someone who is frail, aged, has dementia, an ongoing disability, an acquired brain injury or a chronic or mental illness. The person they care for has difficulty managing at home or in the community without assistance.

Carers need time out to attend to other matters, other family members and above all, have time for themselves. Having a break from the demands of caring can assist carers to look after their own health and wellbeing.



## Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre / CarerLinks North

These co-located services run by Merri Community Health Services provide free information and assistance to carers and the broader community in the Northern Metropolitan sub-region of Melbourne (which includes the municipalities of Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Moreland, Nillumbik, Whittlesea and Yarra).

- Carelink is an information service aimed at helping people live independently at home
- Our services for carers include support, counselling and practical assistance in finding and booking respite services. Brokerage funds are available to purchase respite services unavailable from mainstream providers. Information and Response Workers are available to assess and respond to carers' needs. Access to emergency respite after hours is also available. Specialised services include:
  - The Dementia Education and Training for Carers Program
  - Aged Carer Support Respite Program providing support to carers of people with dementia or who are frail aged
  - The Young Carers Program supporting carers aged under 25, especially those still at school
  - The Mental Health Respite Program supporting carers of people of all ages with a mental illness
  - The Older Families Support and Planning Program supports older carers of people with a lifelong disability
  - Disability Respite Pathways Program providing support to carers of children and adults with disabilities



- The service also works to develop, enhance and support respite services in the region.
- Vacancy Seeker provides up to date on-line information and assistance in booking residential respite services in aged care facilities. <http://vcsn.vacancyseeker.org.au>

These services can be accessed by calling 1800 052 222\* or (03) 9495 2500 – 24 hour emergency respite is also available on these numbers.

\*Freecall from landlines. Mobile calls at carrier rates.

## Case Management Services

This service aims to support younger people with disabilities and frail aged people so they can remain living in their own homes. In partnership with the person and his/her carer, the Case Manager coordinates and purchases a range of services such as respite, personal care and transport, to promote the person's independence, physical health and emotional well being.

For further information phone Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre / CarerLinks North on 1800 052 222 or (03) 9495 2500.

## Activity Programs

Activity Programs are designed to help older people and people with disabilities stay healthy and active by engaging in interesting and fun group activities. Activities include physical exercise (such as tai chi and walking), arts and crafts sessions, gardening and discussion groups on ways to improve health and wellbeing. There are a range of activities tailored for people's individual needs and interests, for example, specific cultural groups, book clubs and outing groups.

Activity Programs are accessed via Service Access on: (03) 9388 9933.

## Interchange North West

Interchange North West provides recreational activities for children and young people with disabilities.

- The Recreation Program offers a range of fun, community based activities including age & ability based youth groups, school holiday programs & camps
- This service is available to families with children and young adults with disabilities who live in the municipalities of Moreland and Hume.
- For further information phone Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre / CarerLinks North on 1800 052 222\* or (03) 9495 2500.

\*Freecall from landlines. Mobile calls at carrier rates.

## Hospital Admission Risk Program (HARP) Partnerships in Health

HARP Partnerships in Health is a service for people with chronic and complex medical conditions who make frequent trips to hospital and require intensive service coordination. This program coordinates care and the provision of services to meet the health care needs of clients. It aims to assist clients to stay out of hospital by addressing potential issues before they become problems.

HARP Partnerships in Health is a group of agencies made up of Merri Community Health Services, Doutta Galla Community Health Service, Melbourne General Practice Network, the Royal District Nursing Service and the Royal Melbourne Hospital. The program operates across the cities of Melbourne, Moonee Valley and Moreland, and the suburb of Broadmeadows.

## Allied Health

The Allied Health program offers a range of health practitioner services such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, dietetics, speech therapy, podiatry and nursing. There are a variety of individual and group based services to support our community members to maintain their health and wellbeing.

Further information regarding these services is available from Service Access on: (03) 9388 9933.



For further information and appointments:

• Phone Service Access on (03) 9388 9933

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