

Guide for public sector staff

Carers in NSW

- There are approximately 854,300 carers in NSW.¹
- A carer provides ongoing help to someone who needs it because of disability, a long term or life-limiting illness, mental illness, drugs and alcohol, dementia or ageing. Your colleague or client may be a carer.
- Some carers do not realise they are, or do not want to identify as a carer. Some cultures do not identify with the term carer.

Obligations for public sector agencies

- Human service agencies in NSW have obligations under the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 (the Act).
- A human service agency is a public sector agency that provides services or employment directed at carers or the people they care for.
- A Carers Charter was established under the Act to recognise carers and raise awareness of their needs.

Public sector agencies means any of the following:

- a Division of the Government Service
- a Local Health District or statutory health corporation (within the meaning of the Health Services Act 1997)
- the NSW Police Force
- a NSW Government agency or other authority of the State
- a local council
- a State owned corporation.

All public sector staff must:

- become aware of and understand the Carers Charter at Schedule 1 of the Act.
- Staff in human service agencies must reflect the principles in their activities
- consult with appropriate organisations that represent carers when developing policies that impact on carers
- develop internal human resources policies following appropriate consideration of the Carers Charter.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2018) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

Carers working in the public sector

- Many carers are employed throughout the public sector.
- Flexible workplace policies now benefit all staff. Working carers who utilise flexible working options and can help them in their caring role, including use of carers leave, job sharing, flexible hours/ start and finish times, part time work and working from home.
- Managers can advise what is possible in each individual circumstance.
- Also managers can talk about how a Carer Employee Network could be established or how to become a member of an existing network.
- Under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 employers are required to reasonably accommodate the caring responsibilities of their employees.

How to provide services that reflect the NSW Carers Charter

- consider the views of carers – they are the experts
- include carers in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services that impact on them and the person they care for
- provide information about and/or refer carers to appropriate support services
- acknowledge that carers have their own needs within and outside the caring role
- provide support for carers which is timely, responsive, accessible and appropriate.

About the NSW Carers Advisory Council

The NSW Carers Advisory Council advances the interests of carers. The Council provides advice to the NSW Government on legislation, policy and other matters relating to carers.

Other resources

- DCJ Carers
- NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010
- NSW Carers Charter
- Annual Reporting Template
- NSW Carers Strategy - Caring in NSW 2020-2030
- Implementation Guidelines for Public Sector Agencies
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 Part 4B Discrimination on the ground of a person's responsibilities as a carer
- Carers, Service NSW: Supporting carers with programs, services, payments and concessions

More information

Department of Communities and Justice

Web: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/carers>

Email: CarerStr@facs.nsw.gov.au