

Northern Adelaide  
Local Health Network

# Division of Mental Health

Information for  
Consumers and Carers



**Government  
of South Australia**

SA Health

WELCOME TO OUR SERVICE  
A SHARED VISION OF BETTER HEALTH

Best care. First time. Every time.

**Important information**

**If you or a person close to you is currently experiencing a mental health emergency please call Mental Health Triage on 13 14 65.**

This information pack has been divided into two separate yet complementary sections. Consumers and carers are encouraged to read through all sections, to help them understand all elements of the journey ahead.

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# Division of Mental Health

## ABOUT MENTAL ILLNESS

### What is mental illness?

About one in five Australians will experience a mental illness, and most of us will experience a mental health problem at some time in our lives.

Mental illness is a general term that refers to a group of illnesses that significantly affect how a person feels, thinks, behaves, and interacts with other people. Mental illness is diagnosed according to standardised criteria (and the term mental disorder can also be used).

Mental illnesses cause a great deal of suffering to those experiencing them, as well as their families and friends. Furthermore, these problems appear to be increasing. According to the World Health Organization, depression will be one of the biggest health problems worldwide by the year 2020.

A mental health problem also interferes with how a person thinks, feels, and behaves – but to a lesser extent than a mental illness. Mental health problems are more common and less severe than mental illness, and include the mental ill health that can be experienced temporarily as a reaction to the stresses of life. If not effectively dealt with, mental health problems can develop into a mental illness.

### What types of mental illnesses are there?

Mental illnesses come in different types and degrees of severity. Some of the major types are depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, bipolar mood disorder, personality disorders and eating disorders.

### Psychosis

Some illnesses such as schizophrenia, severe depression and bipolar mood disorder may involve symptoms of psychosis. People experiencing an acute episode of psychosis lose touch with reality and perceive their world differently from normal. Their ability to make sense of thoughts, feelings, and the world around them is seriously affected.

A psychotic episode may involve delusions, such as false beliefs of persecution, guilt, or grandeur. It may involve hallucinations, where the person sees, hears, smells, or tastes things that are not there. Psychotic episodes can be threatening and confusing to other people. Such behaviour is difficult to understand for people who are not familiar with it.

Additionally, psychosis is a distressing symptom of illicit drug use and usually stops when the drug has worn off. In rare circumstances however it can lead to a schizophrenia type illness.

## Anxiety and depressive disorders

The most common mental illnesses are anxiety and depressive disorders. While everyone experiences strong feelings of tension, fear or sadness at times, a mental illness is present when these feelings become so disturbing and overwhelming that people have great difficulty coping with day-to-day activities such as work, enjoying leisure time and maintaining relationships and usually last much longer than general sadness.

At their most extreme, people with a depressive disorder may not be able to get out of bed or care for themselves physically. People with certain types of anxiety disorder may not be able to leave the house, may have compulsive rituals to help them alleviate their fears, or repeated unwanted memories of a distressing event.

## Where can I get more information about my illness?

If you would like specific information on your illness, please ask one of our staff who can provide you with the most up-to-date fact sheet or information. We will also be able to provide you with details of illness-specific support groups and services.

**Did you know?** - Most people have been affected by, or have known someone affected by, a mental illness. Almost half of all Australians have experienced some form of mental illness at some point in their lifetime.

## TREATMENT FOR MENTAL ILLNESS

### Is mental illness treatable?

Yes, mental illness can be treated. This means that many people who are treated for mental illness recover completely.

Recognising the early signs and symptoms of mental illness and accessing effective treatment early is important. The earlier treatment starts, the better the outcome.

Mental illness can come and go during different periods in people's lives. Some people experience only a brief period of illness and fully recover. For others, it can recur and remit at different times in their life.

Effective treatments can include medication, cognitive and behavioural psychological therapies, psycho-social support, psychiatric disability rehabilitation, avoidance of risk factors such as harmful alcohol and other drug use, and learning self-management skills.

People with a mental illness need the same understanding and support given to people with a physical illness. A mental illness is no different – it is not an illness for which anyone should be blamed.

### What does 'treatment' really mean?

Treatment means all the different ways in which someone with a mental illness can get help to minimise the effects of the illness, with different treatment options and self-management. It can involve medication, individual therapy and various supports in the community.

Sometimes a person with a mental illness may require an admission to hospital. Admission to hospital-based services requires assessment by a community-based mental health services or a hospital emergency department.

## GETTING HELP FOR MENTAL HEALTH

### When I need help, where should I go?

If you need help your first point of contact should be your family doctor or General Practitioner (GP) – they will help you figure out what service will be the best for you and your situation. If you don't have a regular GP, try to make an appointment close to where you live.

If you feel that your situation is urgent you can call Mental Health Triage on 13 14 65.

## RECOVERY FROM A PERIOD OF MENTAL ILLNESS

### What is meant by 'recovery'?

We understand that each person's journey of recovery from mental illness is unique and deeply personal. Recovery is often described as a journey from a life dominated by symptoms of illness and disability, to a life with meaning despite mental illness. The majority of mental illness presentations are fully treatable; remember to discuss outcomes with your doctor.

## ABOUT OUR SERVICES

### Northern Adelaide Local Health Network

#### Community Mental Health Services

We offer a wide range of mental health services – including acute, early intervention, rehabilitation, recovery and specialist mental health care services and all services are tailored to meet the recovery needs of our consumers, through individual plans of care.

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## Inpatient Teams

Mental Health consumers can either be admitted in a planned manner through Community Mental Health Services, through an emergency department or via a general medical/surgical pathway. Consumers can expect a consumer centred approach delivered by a caring and supportive multidisciplinary team that includes Consultant Psychiatrists, Psychiatric Registrars, Mental Health Nurses, Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Social Workers and Peer Specialists.

A range of therapies and activities are offered to support recovery from acute episodes of mental illness.

Families and carers are encouraged to be involved in their consumer's assessment, treatment and discharge planning.

## Psychosocial teams

Clinical Psychosocial Rehabilitation Programs within the community are run by staff, volunteers and consumers. The program is for people who experience a mental illness. It aims to promote wellness and recovery and prevent relapse by providing a group rehabilitation program where people can develop new skills, friendships, trust and be accepted.

## MEET OUR TEAM:

### Professional staff include:

#### *Consultant Psychiatrists*

Our psychiatrists diagnose, manage and care for people with mental illnesses *whilst taking into account all aspects of a person's life and their situation.*

#### *Doctors / Psychiatric Medical Officers*

We have other doctors at various levels of their training, and who work directly under the supervision of our psychiatrists to facilitate the delivery of care.

### *Nurses*

Our team of mental health nurses provide high level of care to people with a mental health illness. Our nurses undertake a holistic approach in assessing and care planning that incorporates the psychosocial, environmental, cultural and physical wellbeing of our consumers. Nurses can provide you, your family and carers with advice and support on mental illness and the journey of recovery.

### *Occupational therapists*

Our occupational therapists work with people with mental illness to assist them to gain, regain and maintain their independence. An occupational therapist will help by assessing and supporting you to address barriers that restrict your ability to participate in everyday activities, roles and occupations.

### *Psychologists*

Our clinical psychologists are trained in the assessment and treatment of psychological disorders. They specialise in evidence-based psychological and talking therapies which may be conducted in individual or group settings.

### *Social workers*

Our social workers have a strong commitment to improving the mental health and wellbeing of consumers by seeking to enhance access to opportunities for full participation in social and economic life.

Non-Clinical staff include:

### *Peer Workers / Carer Consultants*

Peer workers have a lived experience of mental illness. They use the skills and knowledge they have gained in their recovery to assist others in their personal recovery from mental illness.

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## YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Providing high quality health care and supporting South Australians to stay healthy are top priorities for the State Government.

Our public health care system provides a range of services to the community including: acute hospital care, mental health and disability services, dental care, health promotion, screening and prevention and scientific and laboratory services.

*Your Rights and Responsibilities – A Charter for Consumers of the South Australian Public Health System* provides general information about your rights as a consumer of health services.

This includes your rights to information, consent to treatment, confidentiality of your personal health information and your right to receive appropriate care.

The Charter provides information about how you can participate in decision making about your health care and summarises your responsibilities as a consumer of health services.

## Mental Health Statement of Rights

The Mental health Statement of Rights provides information about mental health treatment orders, your mental health care, and summarises your rights and responsibilities as a consumer of mental health services.

The statement of rights brochures per treatment order are available for download in 15 languages other than English.

***Ask your mental health clinician for a copy of the  
'Your Rights and Responsibilities'  
Booklet and a Mental Health Statement of Rights.***

## MENTAL HEALTH CARE PLAN

The Mental Health Care Plan has been developed in consultation with consumers, carers and clinicians. It is a document that is owned by you (the consumer) that describes who is involved in your care, and what you require and how this is to be achieved. It evolves over time as you recover and includes a

crisis plan so you and your carers know what to do if you need urgent support. Recovery is often improved if your carers are actively involved with your care plan.

Where possible your carer will also receive a plan, the plans all work together to ensure the best outcome. A mental health clinician will work with you and your carer and/or family to help to develop the care plan.

***Ask your mental health clinician for more information about your care plan.***

## SEEKING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Across South Australia, there are a range of government, non-government and not-for-profit support services available to people living with mental illness. These services offer counselling, information, group sessions, phone and peer support to consumers, families, friends and carers.

To find out more about available support services, speak to one of our staff who can help guide you to a service that will best suit your needs.

Below are some support services and websites you might find helpful:

### *Skylight Mental Health*

Telephone: (08) 8378 4100

Email: [skylight@skylight.org.au](mailto:skylight@skylight.org.au)

<https://www.skylight.org.au>

### *Health Consumers Alliance*

Level 1, 12 Pirie Street

Adelaide SA 5000

Telephone: (08) 8231 4169

Email: [info@hcasa.asn.au](mailto:info@hcasa.asn.au)

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

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## *Carers SA*

58 King William Street  
Goodwood SA 5034  
PO Box 410  
Unley SA 5061  
Telephone: (08) 8291 5600  
Email: [info@carers-sa.asn.au](mailto:info@carers-sa.asn.au)  
[www.carers-sa.asn.au](http://www.carers-sa.asn.au)

## *Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists*

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

## *Beyond Blue*

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

## *Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia*

[www.dassa.sa.gov.au](http://www.dassa.sa.gov.au)

## *SANE Australia*

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

## *Young Carers Australia*

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

## *Anxiety Australia*

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

## *Borderline Personality Disorder Information and Support*

[www.bpdcentral.com](http://www.bpdcentral.com)

## INFORMATION FOR CARERS, FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

### The role of a carer

We understand that mental illness affects not only the individual, but also those who surround them. Families, carers and friends play important roles in supporting a person with a mental illness on their journey to recovery.

Caring for someone with a mental illness can be a difficult and painful experience. It takes time and can be emotionally draining. Watching someone you love experiencing an illness or symptoms can be highly frustrating and painful – and it can be particularly difficult if the person concerned feels that they do not need help, but behaves in ways that cause problems for themselves and possibly for you, too.

### Who is a carer?

Many carers never actually think of themselves as a 'carer'. They may be a parent, a child, a husband, a wife, a grandchild, a friend or a partner caring for someone with a mental illness.

Many people fall into the role of carer because they see it as an extension of their responsibilities within the relationship they already have with the person who is ill. Carers also may not necessarily reside with the person for whom they are caring, and their role in the person's life may change over time.

### How do I support a person with a mental illness?

Helping someone with a mental illness can range from giving them emotional support to providing them with practical support to live their day-to-day life.

It is important to develop a practical, positive attitude about the illness and learn as much as you can so you can recognise symptoms and understand the issues you will face. Our staff can provide you with any information you need.

Caring for someone with a mental illness can be very hard. It's important that you try not to take things personally, and always ensure you are also looking after yourself.

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Make sure that you allow for regular 'time out' to do the things you enjoy. Talk about how you feel – to another family member, a friend, a carer consultant or one of our staff. Bottling up your feelings when distressed or frustrated does not help. Importantly, remember that it is okay to ask for help – there are many support groups out there specifically to support you as you care for someone with a mental illness.

## Young carers

Young carers are children and young people who help or take on the 'caring' role in families where someone has an illness, disability, mental disorder or substance abuse problems. They might help out with cleaning or preparation of meals, assisting their relative with daily tasks, helping with medicines, showering, dressing, or by 'watching out' to make sure that they're OK.

Across Australia, many children and young people help care for their relatives. Many young carers say that caring can be a great thing to do; that they're proud of who they are and what they do, and that they have built up a whole swag of useful skills.

If you would like information on the support services available for young carers, talk to one of our staff or visit [www.youngcarers.net.au](http://www.youngcarers.net.au)

## What can I do in a crisis?

If your family member or friend is being assisted by one of our mental health teams, please contact the team or their care coordinator first. If this is out of normal business hours, you can telephone our emergency mental health service on 131 465.

Remember, in an emergency still call 000.

## SEEKING SUPPORT

### Where can I find support?

Across South Australia there are numerous services designed to support family members, friends and carers of people with a mental illness.

## Family support services

Organisations such as the Skylight Mental Health and Schizophrenia Fellowship were founded to provide support and services to families, friends and carers in managing the impact of mental illness.

These agencies offer services such as counselling, information and peer support to people with a mental illness, their families, friends and carers. Other services may include phone support, support groups and referrals.

## Carer associations

In each state and territory, there is a carer association working to bring the needs, views and concerns of carers to the attention of the community as a whole, including government, policy makers, health professionals and service providers.

To find out more about carer support groups, talk to one of our staff who can provide you with information on the different groups and help guide you to a service that best suits your needs.

Our Carer Consultants share their 'top tips' for managing the experience of caring for someone with mental illness...

- > Take good care of yourself. You deserve it!
- > Learn as much as possible about mental illness and what helps people recover.
- > Maintain your important relationships.
- > Encourage independence and self-reliance in the future of the person you are caring for and seek professional helpers who are effective and willing to collaborate with you on the recovery journey.
- > Set boundaries and limits.
- > Don't lose your sense of humour.
- > Stay flexible! The ability to change and to look at things differently is key to coping with challenges.

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- > Talk to other carers – their knowledge and experience can really help!
- > Remember the other people in your life. They have needs too!
- > It's important to express your emotions. Let go, cry if you need to.
- > Keep the illness in perspective. Don't let it take over your life or you will lose your effectiveness.
- > If you need to know something, don't hesitate, just ask your health worker or Mental Health Triage on 131 465.
- > Stay hopeful! New research is emerging and medication and services are improving all the time.

## Carer Respite provided by Non-Government Services

### **Respite – what is it and where can I get it?**

Respite is taking time out, or having a break from your usual supportive role of assisting a person with a mental illness.

### PLANNED/EMERGENCY RESPITE CONTACTS

#### Northern Carers Network

Telephone: (08) 8284 0388

Fax: 8284 0399

Email: [office@ncnw.org.au](mailto:office@ncnw.org.au)

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

#### Carers Link Barossa and Districts

Carers Link on Yorke Peninsula

Telephone: (08) 8821 2444

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

#### Carer Wellness Centres at Woodside or Strathalbyn

Telephone: (08) 8389 7383

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

#### Carer Support and Respite Centre

Telephone: (08) 8379 5777

### SA Country Carers

Telephone: 1300 686 405

### Carers SA

[www.carers-sa.asn.au](http://www.carers-sa.asn.au)

### *Mind Australia*

One-on-one support/day trips/ short breaks for family or individuals/camps

Telephone: (08) 8351 3891

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

### *Skylight Mental Health*

Telephone: (08) 8378 4100

Email: [skylight@skylight.org.au](mailto:skylight@skylight.org.au)

<https://www.skylight.org.au>

### YMCA

Body, mind and spirit retreats – outdoor/adventure camps for care recipients

Telephone: (08) 8200 2500

[www.sa.ymca.org.au](http://www.sa.ymca.org.au)

### *Anglicare*

Community house

Telephone: (08) 8269 8778

[www.anglicare-sa.org.au](http://www.anglicare-sa.org.au)

## Useful contacts and websites for carers

Young Carers Australia

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

Anxiety Australia

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

Borderline Personality Disorder Information and Support

[www.bpdcentral.com](http://www.bpdcentral.com)

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## *Beyond Blue*

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

## *Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia*

[www.dassa.sa.gov.au](http://www.dassa.sa.gov.au)

## *SANE Australia*

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

## YOUR RIGHTS AS A CARER

### SA Carers Charter

The *South Australian Carers Recognition Act 2005* was passed in South Australia's Parliament in October 2005 and provides formal acknowledgement that carers have rights and enshrines the SA Carers Charter in legislation.

### SA Carers Charter principles

1. Carers have choices within their caring role.
2. Carer health and wellbeing are critical to the community.
3. Carers play a critical role in maintaining the fabric of society.
4. Service providers work in partnership with carers.
5. Carers in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities need specific considerations.
6. All children and young people have the right to enjoy life and to reach their potential.
7. Resources are available to provide timely, appropriate and adequate assistance to carers.

## YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a carer of someone receiving services from our team, you can expect our staff to:

- > introduce themselves and advise you of their role in your relative's or friend's care
- > treat you with dignity and respect
- > reply appropriately to any concerns or queries
- > involve you in the consumer's care planning
- > inform you when they liaise with other health workers to provide continuity of care
- > provide you with appropriate access to interpreters
- > discuss the available treatment options with you, keep your personal information confidential and respect your privacy
- > support and help you to manage the consumer's health and wellbeing.

### What about legislation?

Various pieces of legislation (such as the *Mental Health Act*, the *Criminal Law Consolidation Act* and the *Guardianship and Administration Act*) can modify the consumer's rights. In these instances, some decisions regarding the consumer's care, the range of treatments available and confidentiality may be made on behalf of the consumer. Information about appealing legal orders is available from our staff.

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## Looking after our carers

We are committed to establishing and providing:

- > continual development and progression of recovery orientation and services
- > increasing engagement of consumers in the participation of their own care
- > ongoing employment of consumers and carers
- > ongoing implementation, monitoring and review
- > ongoing commitment to increasing involvement of families/carers in both individual care and service development and improvement.

## PROVIDING FEEDBACK ON OUR SERVICES

We want to hear from you!

Feedback about consumer and carer experiences provides valuable information about what we are doing well, and where we could do things better. So please let us know what you think, because we really do value your opinion.

## Making a complaint

If you are unhappy with the care you or someone you know is receiving, you have the right to provide negative feedback and feel confident to do so.

For more information on making a complaint, providing feedback or contacting our Consumer Advisors, please ask for a copy of our brochure on the NALHN Consumer Advisory Service or alternatively, contact one of our Consumer Advisors on telephone 1300 013 988 or via email on [NALHNConsumerAdvisors@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:NALHNConsumerAdvisors@health.sa.gov.au)

## What will a Consumer Adviser do?

All complaints made to a Consumer Adviser, will be investigated in a timely manner that balances the rights of consumers, carers and staff. Any information you provide will be handled with sensitivity, and you will receive as much information as possible about the resolution of your complaint. Where complaints are complex, you will be kept informed of progress.

For more information on this process, please refer to our brochure on the NALHN Consumer Advisory Service or alternatively; contact our Consumer Advisors by telephone on 1300 013 988 or via email on [NALHNConsumerAdvisors@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:NALHNConsumerAdvisors@health.sa.gov.au)

## The NALHN Consumer Advisory Council

The NALHN Consumer Advisory Council brings the voices of the community and consumers into our decision making processes. This helps to develop services that are responsive to the needs of our diverse catchment population.

Consumers, clients, families and carers who are interested in providing consumer input to NALHN can contact (08) 8133 2064 to enquire about joining the Consumer Register.

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## CONTACT NUMBERS FOR OUR SERVICES

Emergency & Crisis support telephone service; 24 hrs a day,  
7 days a week – 13 14 65

### Hospital services

- > Lyell McEwin Hospital Ward 1G – Oldham Road, Elizabeth Vale  
Telephone: (08) 8182 9318
- > Modbury Hospital: Woodleigh House – Smart Road, Modbury  
Telephone: (08) 8161 2399
- > Lyell McEwin Hospital Ward 1H,  
Lyell McEwin Hospital Oldham Road, Elizabeth Vale  
Telephone: (08) 8133 2162

### Community Teams

- > Modbury Office – 116 Reservoir Road, Modbury  
Telephone: (08) 7425 6300
- > Salisbury Office – 7-9 Park Terrace, Salisbury  
Telephone: (08) 7485 4300
- > Older Persons Mental Health Service Northern team  
116 Reservoir Rd, Modbury  
Telephone: (08) 7425 6300
- > Northern Community Rehabilitation Program, Club 84  
84 Yorktown Road, Elizabeth Park  
Telephone: (08) 8287 3800
- > North Eastern Community Rehabilitation Program, The Gully  
116 Reservoir Road Modbury  
Telephone: (08) 7425 6366
- > Community Recovery Centre: Wondakka – 10 Saratoga Road, Elizabeth East  
Telephone: (08) 8282 1840

## Statewide Mental Health Service

- > Ashton House  
290 Fosters Road, Oakden 5086  
Telephone: 08 7425 5222
- > Court Assessment Service  
Telephone: (08) 7425 6285
- > Forensic Community Mental Health Service –  
200 Fosters Road, Oakden  
Telephone: (08) 7425 6250
- > James Nash House – 140 Hilltop Drive, Oakden  
Telephone: (08) 8266 9600
- > Owenia House (formerly SOTAP)  
Telephone: (08) 7425 6399
- > Northgate House OPMHS  
Contact: Nurse Unit Manager  
Dumfries Avenue, Northgate  
Telephone: (08) 8266 8000

## For more information

Lyell McEwin Hospital  
Northern Mental Health Services  
Elizabeth Vale SA 5112  
Telephone: 08 8182 9000



This document has been reviewed and endorsed by NALHN CAC\* for consumers and the community September 2016.  
\*Northern Adelaide Local Health Network Consumer Advisory Council.



Interpreter



[www.ausgoal.gov.au/creative-commons](http://www.ausgoal.gov.au/creative-commons)



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