



PROVIDING INFORMATION, EDUCATION, ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR SOMEONE WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS
FUNDED BY THE NSW HEALTH DEPARTMENT THROUGH THE MENTAL HEALTH AND DRUG AND ALCOHOL OFFICE

MEDIA RELEASE

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'Assisting Families' caring for people with mental illness

Relatives and caregivers can gain a new understanding of Mental Illness and Psychosis

Families with a loved one diagnosed with serious mental illness often think they'll receive the same attention, support and help as someone diagnosed with a serious medical disease.

"That is simply not the case," says local Carer Advocate Carly Vesela.

"And there is still the stigma that is associated with mental illness," she said, "which keeps many people from reaching out for the help they need."

Carers can be parents, partners, a brother or sister, friends or neighbours – anyone who is impacted upon by sharing the life of someone with a mental illness.

The 'Assisting Families & Carers' workshop is being run by Carer Assist in the local Cooma area and is designed for people who have someone in their lives who has recently been ill for the first time or those who have not had previous education in mental illness or psychosis.

The workshop aims to be empowering and participants will be able to meet others in a similar situation sharing similar difficulties.

"Families with a loved one with serious mental illness are often trying to take care of somebody who is seriously ill in a way they can't understand," Ms Vesela said.

"A carer is more likely to have empathy for their loved one and will be better able to develop coping strategies with an improved understanding of the illness."

Carer Assist is a non-government organisation that is funded to provide information, advocacy, support and education to family members and friends of people with mental illness.

The free one-day workshop goes a long way towards helping carers understand these sorts of issues and to help them better communicate with their mentally ill loved one.

The workshop will be run on June 14th between 10am to 4pm at the Cooma Library. There is no cost to take part in 'Assisting Families & Carers' – but bookings are essential.

For further information, and to secure a place in this program, please contact the Greater Southern Carer Assist office on 02 6232 9044 or email infogs@carerassist.org.au

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