

# Carers Circle

Supporting Family Carers



“We are very excited to announce a Carers Summit in March 2012. This event, hosted by Carers ACT, will bring together carers, decision-makers and other stakeholders.”



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## CEO's Message

**Welcome to the spring edition of Carers Circle.**

As Carers have been telling us, people with disability and mental illness need more places and greater choices in supported accommodation. Also, young people with disability who are unable to access employment need better support to access quality of life activities and programs.

In response, we are very excited to announce a Carers Summit in March 2012. This event, hosted by Carers ACT, will bring together carers, decision-makers and other stakeholders to find practical solutions to these two issues. More about the summit is on page 3.

Also in this issue, we feature Melinda Smith, a carer and award-winning poet who has been kind enough to share two wonderful poems that give a unique and moving insight into the world of autism.

We also reflect on October's successful Carers Week, which this year included the launch of the ACT Carers Charter, two great social events for our carers and through the media, some great public exposure to carer issues.

Our 2010–2011 Annual Report is now available on our website and we welcome all carers to take a look to learn how we served the ACT's caring families during the past year.

From 17 December, we will be discontinuing our Saturday morning opening hours due to a lack of use by carers. More on this, as well as our opening hours for the end of year holiday period, are on the back cover.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a safe and enjoyable festive and holiday season.

**Dee McGrath**  
Chief Executive Officer



## REGISTER NOW FOR ***THE CARERS SUMMIT*** MARCH 2012

This year has seen considerable progress in establishing mental health and disability as areas in need of systemic and material reform.

**WEDNESDAY 14 MARCH 2012**

**VENUE: ACT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**TIME: 9:30AM TO 1:30PM**

With the Federal Government's decision to endorse the Productivity Commission's recommendation that a National Disability Insurance Scheme be implemented, disability services have been placed at the forefront of the social reform agenda. The National Mental Health Strategy also represents a step towards national collaboration on mental health initiatives. However, government data shows that improvement has not been consistent across all service lines, with government spending on mental health in the ACT increasing by \$17.5 million between 2002–2003 and 2007–2008, but residential services actually decreasing as a proportion of mental health funding.<sup>1</sup>

The 2012–2013 ACT Budget process provides an important opportunity to ready the nation's capital for the next stage of reform in these areas. Carers ACT does not propose costly capital investment to establish a supported accommodation footprint or a band-aid solution of one-off funding to support a small percentage of people with disability or mental health needs. Instead, we have developed a suite of budget options which offer an opportunity for considered action. These options aim to prepare the ACT for the National Disability Insurance Scheme through in-depth analysis of need and genuine prioritisation.

The Carers ACT budget proposal focuses on two key priority areas for people with disability and people with mental health needs:

- **Supported accommodation;** and
- **Meaningful options for young people with disability** who are unable to access employment.

Carers ACT proposes two strategies for the identification of supported accommodation need and the development of appropriate policy responses through:

- **A Carer Summit** in which stakeholders come together to a) constructively discuss these priority areas for people with disability, people with mental health needs and their carers, and b) develop and prioritise practical responses.
- An in-depth **economic analysis** of the genuine costs of both action and inaction in the context of understanding demand and supply of supported accommodation now and into the future.

We believe that these two strategies will allow the ACT to better prepare for future demand and plan effectively for accommodation service responses which genuinely meet identified need in the community.

*(continues page 4)*

<sup>1</sup> Department of Health and Ageing, National Mental Health Report 2010, May 2011



## REGISTER NOW FOR **THE CARERS SUMMIT MARCH 2012**

*(continued from page 3)*

The Carers ACT budget proposal further recommends urgent action to address the gap in support for young people with disability who are, as a result of the severity of their disability, unable to access employment opportunities through supported or open employment.

Carers ACT, as the peak body representing the Territory's carers, looks forward to hosting a Carers Summit on Wednesday 14 March. The agenda will focus on:

- **Identifying the key barriers** to supported accommodation for people with disability and mental health issues;
- **Establishing accurate information on current supply and demand**, including drilling down into anticipated need based on analysis of school leavers with disability and mental health issues over the coming five, ten and twenty years;
- **Developing service models** which allow for a reasonable degree of choice; and
- **Examining funding requirements** and how the National Disability Insurance Scheme may link to these.

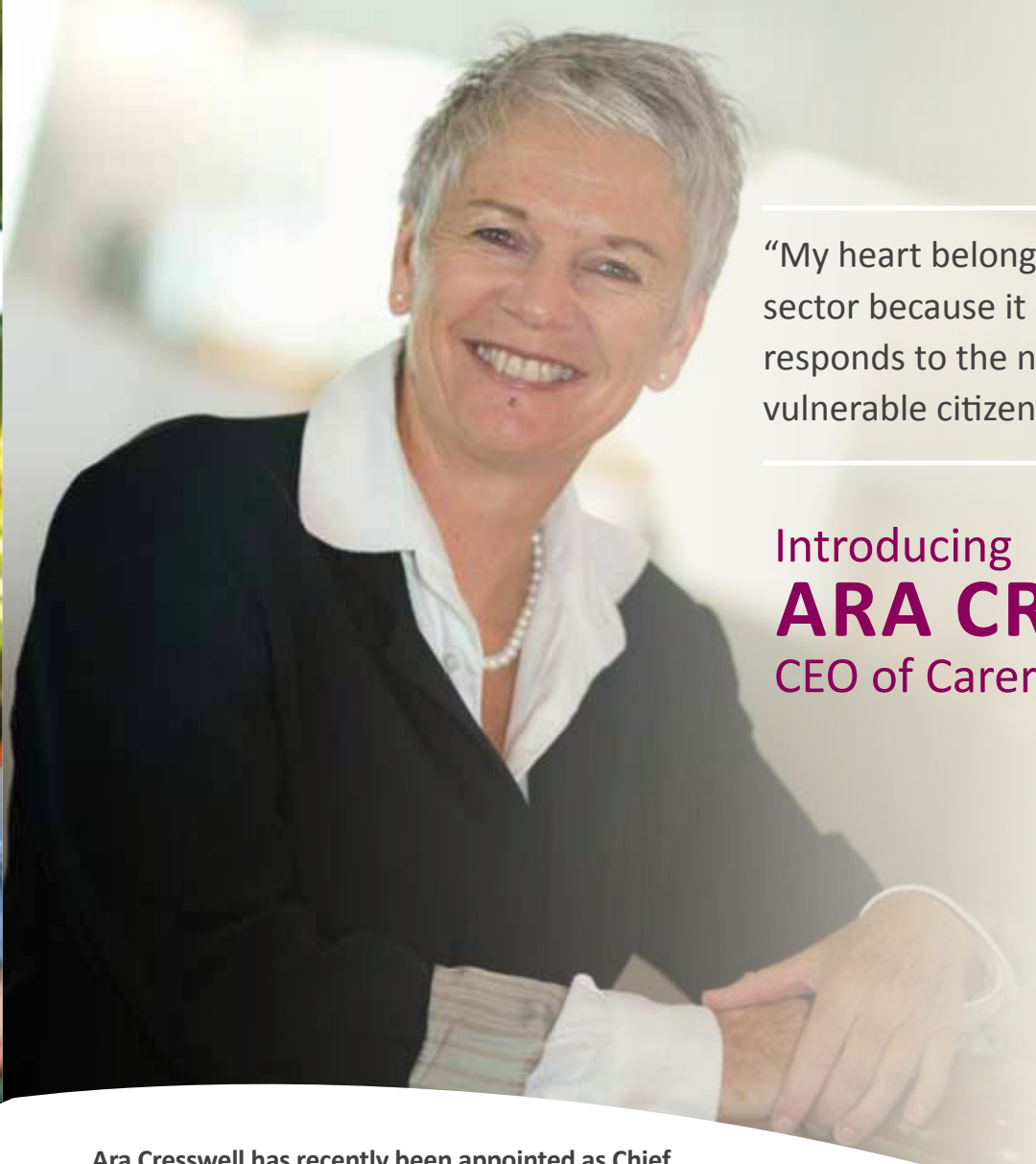
If you are caring for someone with mental illness or a young person with a disability who is unlikely to transition into employment, or if you are involved in supporting these families, you should not miss out on the Carers Summit.

The organising committee comprises carers of people with mental illness and disability, Board members of Carers ACT, representatives from each political party in the ACT and representatives from ADACAS, Mental Health Community Coalition and a large disability service provider.

For more information please contact Dee McGrath on [dee.mcgrath@carersact.org.au](mailto:dee.mcgrath@carersact.org.au).

To register your interest in participating in the summit please contact Lindy Walker on 6296 9900 or by email to: [lindy.walker@carersact.org.au](mailto:lindy.walker@carersact.org.au).

Updates on the summit will be regularly posted on our website: [www.carersact.org.au](http://www.carersact.org.au).



“My heart belongs in the community sector because it is this sector that responds to the needs of the nation’s most vulnerable citizens day in and day out.”

## Introducing **ARA CRESSWELL** CEO of Carers Australia

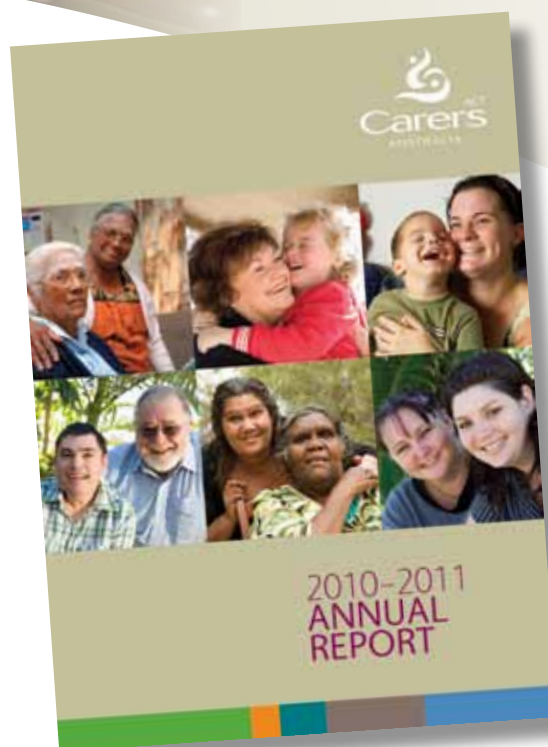
**Ara Cresswell has recently been appointed as Chief Executive Officer of Carers Australia and brings with her a wealth of experience as an executive in the not-for-profit sector.**

She is excited to join Carers Australia at a time when there is considerable national attention being paid to carers and looks forward to working with a range of stakeholders to progress action from the National Carer Strategy.

“I come from a long line of carers – people who often put their own health and wellbeing on hold while they provide the best of care to their loved ones,” says Ara.

“The time has come to ensure that Australia’s 2.6 million carers are given the recognition and support that they deserve. After all, if all the carers across the country were to be replaced by paid care, Australians would need to find over \$40 billion a year to cover the costs.”

Most recently at Reconciliation Australia, Ara served as the Director of Policy and Public Affairs and the Director of Projects and Partnerships with a six month period as the acting CEO. Her experience spans national and ACT organisations – as the Director of the ACT Council of Social Service, the CEO of the Australian Federation of Homelessness Organisations (now Homelessness Australia) and the Executive Director of Toora Women Incorporated.



### **Carers ACT Annual Report 2010–2011**

Available now on our website, under publications at [www.carersact.org.au](http://www.carersact.org.au)

# Autism Poetry by Melinda Smith

**Melinda Smith is an ACT mother of two primary school-aged boys, one of whom has Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).**

Before becoming a family carer she was a published poet with two books to her name, and now that her ASD child is at school for six hours-a-day, she is finally able to find time to write again. In 2011 she was lucky enough to receive an ArtsACT grant to produce a book of poems about autism, which will launch in April 2012 (Autism Awareness Month). Check out more of Melinda's autism poems on her blog: [www.circlequirk.wordpress.com](http://www.circlequirk.wordpress.com) or follow her on [twitter@MelindaLSmith](https://twitter.com/MelindaLSmith). Her previous books (*Mapless in Underland and Pushing thirty, wearing seventeen*) are available from [www.ginninderrapress.com.au](http://www.ginninderrapress.com.au). She regularly publishes poems in the Canberra Times, has won the David Campbell Prize, had her poems appear on ACTION buses, and appeared twice in *Best Australian Poetry* anthologies.

## *I prefer*

*serious illness to surprise  
computers to my brother  
reading number plates to Christmas morning*

*straight lines  
submerging my ears in a warm bath to waterslides  
deep fat fryers to matchbox cars*

*torture to haircuts  
libraries to birthday parties  
standing ankle-deep in ocean*

*tenpin bowling to climbing trees  
looking at things out of the corner of my eye  
Sonic the Hedgehog to family time*

*death to dentist visits  
my mother with her glasses off  
plastic wheelie bins to petting zoos*

*not to see my school friends outside of school  
cricket statistics to Toy Story  
chewing clothes-pegs to talking*

*rules to freedom  
truth to sarcasm  
home*

*to be left alone*

# *Love Song of Autistic Husband*

*It is pleasant to see you;  
when I'm near you I'm happy -  
and if ever you leave me  
I will think it a pity -*

*but my love is not your love.  
You assume that your feelings  
are a halo around you  
I could see if I tried to;*

*that your heart is a mystery  
I could solve if I wanted -  
but to me it's an organ  
and the secrets inside it*

*are just muscles contracting.  
I am always a stranger  
understanding you sideways  
but I'll always be loyal;*

*I can't help but be truthful  
I remember the housework  
and I'm there for the children -  
surely these are important ?*

*You insist I'm withholding  
all my tenderness from you  
but it's not like a river  
that I've slyly diverted:*

*it is more like an absence  
like a cave or a sinkhole.  
When we fight (so you tell me)  
you are harrowed with terror*

*but my anger is over  
when my voice has stopped shouting -  
it is you seems to carry  
little scars for a lifetime.*

*When I think of the future  
I consider you dying:  
what will stretch me to breaking  
won't be grief at your going*

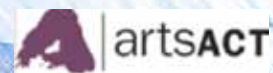
*but the alien business  
of the funeral, the lawyers.  
My routine will be scrambled  
I'll be sick to my stomach*

*I will shout at the children  
I will leave the wake early  
and when later I'm solo  
I will balk at your absence*

*I'll be frightened and angry  
– but I don't think I'll cry.*

© Melinda Smith 2011

These poems were written with the support of:





# Dear Diary

## December, January and February

To RSVP or to find out more, please contact Eleanor on 6296 9908 or by email at [Eleanor.Kinloch@carersact.org.au](mailto:Eleanor.Kinloch@carersact.org.au)

### SUMMER SEASONAL FESTIVE LUNCH

Enjoy a warm welcome to summer with other carers at an 'East meets West' buffet lunch.

**December** – Wednesday 14

**Time:** 12:00pm – 2:00pm

**Location:** Family Food Court Restaurant (upstairs), 28 Woolley St, Dickson.

**RSVP:** By Monday 12 December

### RENAISSANCE EXHIBITION AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA

A private viewing of the Renaissance Exhibition: 15th and 16th Century Italian Paintings from the Accademia Carrara, Bergamo.

**December** – Thursday 15

**Time:** 9:30am

(Meet outside the main entrance at 9:15am)

**RSVP:** By Monday 12 December

### DAY TRIP TO THE ROYAL CANBERRA SHOW

Come and join us for a day at the Royal Canberra Show, tickets and further information will be distributed closer to the event.

**February** – Friday 24

**Time:** 10:00am – 3:00pm

Free for carers, but bookings are essential.

Please RSVP to Eleanor on 626 9908 or [Eleanor.Kinloch@carersact.org.au](mailto:Eleanor.Kinloch@carersact.org.au)

### CARERS CRAFT GROUP

Members work on their own craft items, group projects and learn new skills in a friendly environment. Come and enjoy a chat, some craft and morning tea.

**December** – No group

**January** – Thursday 19 – Work on your own project.

*Note:* This is a week earlier than usual due to Australia Day public holiday.

**February** – Thursday 23 – Mosaic Madness

**Time:** Sessions are from 9:30am – 12.30pm

**Location:** Carers Hub Carers ACT

80 Beaufort Cres, Holt

### ART APPRECIATION GROUP

Meet at The National Gallery of Australia to view and learn about the various exhibitions. Carers can enjoy a coffee afterwards in the Gallery Café.

**December** – Thursday 15, see private viewing above

**January** – No group

**February** – Tuesday 21

**Time:** 10:15am

(Meet outside the main entrance at 10:00am)

### CARERS COFFEE CLUB

Come and join us for morning tea and a chat with other carers.

**December** – Tuesday 13

**January** – Tuesday 10 & 24

**February** – Tuesday 14 & 28

**Time:** 10:00am – 12:00pm

**Location:** Carers Hub, Carers ACT, 80 Beaufort Cres, Holt

## On Course for Carers

On Course for Carers' monthly education sessions support carers in their caring role. Please note that there will be no sessions during December and January.

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### HEARING LOSS

Audiologist Mandy will talk about and answer questions relating to hearing loss, hearing aids and government schemes.

**February** – Thursday 16

**Time:** 10:00am – 12:00pm with morning tea provided at 11:00am.

**Location:** Carers Hub, Carers ACT, 80 Beaufort Cres, Holt.

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### DEMENTIA – MANAGING BEHAVIOURS

Carers ACT staff will talk about dementia, particularly behaviours of concern to carers. When registering, carers will be asked to suggest problems for discussion.

**March** – Wednesday 14

**Time:** 10:00am – 12:00pm with morning tea provided at 11:00am.

**Location:** Carers Hub, Carers ACT, 80 Beaufort Cres, Holt.

For suggestions on future topics, please email Marie at [marief@carersact.asn.au](mailto:marief@carersact.asn.au)



# CALD Diary

## December, January and February

The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) program provides CALD carers with regular opportunities to mix with other Carers and to learn about important issues and how to access support services. To find out more, please contact our CALD Coordinator, Anndey, on 6296 9900 or by email at [Anndey.Ho@carersact.org.au](mailto:Anndey.Ho@carersact.org.au)

Apart from the Summer Celebration event on December 1, there will be no CALD support groups or events during December, January and February. Normal service will resume in March.

## SUPPORT GROUPS

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Carers ACT's support groups offer Carers the chance to share experiences with each other over a cup of tea in a friendly and relaxed setting.

### NORTHSIDE SUPPORT GROUP

**December** – Wednesday 7

**January** – no group

**February** – Wednesday 1

**Time:** 10:00am – 12:00pm

**Location:** Carers ACT Hub, 80 Beaurepaire Cres, Holt

### SOUTHSIDE SUPPORT GROUP

**December** – Tuesday 13

**January** – no group

**February** – Tuesday 14

**Time:** 10:00am – 12:00pm

**Location:** Smith Family, Corner Launceston & Easty Streets, Woden.

### MENTAL HEALTH CARERS SUPPORT GROUP

**December** – no group

**January** – no group

**February** – Wednesday 22

**Time:** 6:00pm – 8:00pm

**Location:** Smith Family,  
Corner Launceston & Easty Streets, Woden

### STAYING AFLOAT – PARENTS GROUP

**December** – Thursday 8

**January** – no group

**February** – Thursday 9

**Time:** 4:00pm – 5:00pm

**Location:** Carers ACT Hub, 80 Beaurepaire Cres, Holt

## KEEPING FAMILIES CONNECTED

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Keeping Families Connected (KFC) is a five-week group program offered by Carers ACT to help families who are caring for someone with a mental health issue and/or a drug dependency. We will work with you to develop strategies to cope with your caring role and to navigate the mental health system to find the supports you need.

The group provides you with the opportunity to connect with other carers who have similar experiences.

The next KFC course will be in February 2012. If you are interested in attending, please contact Robin on 6296 9900 or [Robin.Alderson-Smith@carersact.org.au](mailto:Robin.Alderson-Smith@carersact.org.au)

# Spring Luncheon and Tulip Tops



In typical spring fashion, the warmer weather saw plenty of carers emerge from hibernation to re-energise at some of our special events. We held a Spring Luncheon in September, with more than 60 carers attending.

Also in September, over 70 carers joined our day trip to Tulip Top Gardens just outside of Canberra. With fabulous weather and the tulips in full bloom, they fully enjoyed some much-needed rest and relaxation in this most serene of environments.

"I am over the moon with contentment through my involvement in the Spring Seasonal Lunch, and it is with much gratitude that I thank Carers ACT for the hard work in preparing such a special time for my enjoyment. I had the best time ever, and I am elated with joy at having new friends. Thank you Carers ACT for spoiling me and making me feel special."





# CARERS WEEK 2011

This year's National Carers Week provided an excellent platform to celebrate and promote the wonderful contribution made by Australia's family carers.

A carer luncheon was held here at Carers ACT on October 19, which began with Minister Burch launching the ACT Carers Charter (see page 13).

More than 100 carers attended alongside a few ACT and Federal politicians and government agency representatives. WIN TV and ABC TV and Radio ensured some great exposure for the caring community with national and local stories featuring carer interviews. After brief formalities and media buzz, the luncheon provided carers with plenty of good food and entertainment along with the all-important opportunity to mix and mingle in a relaxed setting.

In addition, the National Gallery of Australia showed their support for Carers Week by hosting 60 carers for a private, guided tour of Infinite Horizons, an exhibition by the famous Australian painter Fred Williams.



## MENTAL HEALTH CARERS: CALL TO ACTION!

If you are caring for someone with mental illness and are interested in creating a better mental health system, then we would like to hear from you,

Through our Mental Health Carers Voice program you have ample opportunity to influence current reforms to the mental health system, both at the ACT and national levels.

You can get involved by:

- Becoming a representative on government and community working groups and committees.
- Contributing to the debate through consultations and forums.
- Sharing your personal stories and perspectives on key issues through the media.

Throughout 2012 we will host training modules to help strengthen your knowledge, skills and confidence to get actively involved. Topics range from understanding how committees work and effective communication to media training.

At the end of this year we will launch the Mental Health Carers Voice website, which will provide all the information about the program as well the latest mental health news and events.

Meanwhile, if you would like to get involved or find out more call Lydia on 6296 9900 or email [mhcarers@carersact.org.au](mailto:mhcarers@carersact.org.au).

## MENTAL HEALTH CARERS VOICE: UPCOMING EVENTS

### CARER ISSUES FORUM: ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW CARER REPRESENTATIVES

**Date:** Thursday 15 December

**Time:** 6:00pm to 8:00pm

**Location:** Belconnen Arts Centre, 118 Emu Bank, Belconnen

### CARER REPRESENTATIVE FORUM: NETWORKING AND CONSULTING

**Date:** Thursday 2 February

**Time:** 12:00pm to 2:00pm

**Location:** Carers ACT Hub, 80 Beaufort Crescent, Holt.

### TRAINING: COMMITTEES AND HOW THEY WORK

**Date:** Tuesday 28 February

**Time:** 6:00pm to 9:00pm

**Location:** Smith Family, Corner Launceston & Easty Streets, Woden.

### CARER REPRESENTATIVE FORUM: NETWORKING AND CONSULTING

**Date:** Thursday 15 March

**Time:** 5:00pm to 6:00pm

**Location:** Smith Family, Corner Launceston & Easty Streets, Woden.

### TRAINING: MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Scheduled for May 2012. Day, time and location to be confirmed.

### CARER REPRESENTATIVE FORUM: NETWORKING AND CONSULTING

**Date:** Thursday 26 April

**Time:** 12:00pm to 2:00pm

**Location:** Carers ACT Hub, 80 Beaufort Crescent, Holt.

### CARER ISSUES FORUM: FIND YOUR WAY THROUGH THE CENTRELINK MAZE

**Date:** Thursday 15 March

**Time:** 6:00pm to 7:30pm

**Location:** Smith Family, Corner Launceston & Easty Streets, Woden.

### TRAINING: SPEAKING UP – BEING ASSERTIVE IN REPRESENTATION AND ADVOCACY

**Date:** Tuesday 24 April

**Time:** 6:00pm to 9:00pm

**Location:** To be confirmed.

### CARER REPRESENTATIVE FORUM: NETWORKING AND CONSULTING

**Date:** Thursday 7 June

**Time:** 6:00pm to 7:30pm

**Location:** Smith Family, Corner Launceston & Easty Streets, Woden.

### CARER ISSUES FORUM: STEP UP, STEP DOWN PROGRAMS

**Date:** Thursday 21 June

**Time:** 6:00pm to 7:30pm

**Location:** Carers ACT Hub, 80 Beaufort Crescent, Holt.



# ACT Carers Charter

Minister Joy Burch launched the ACT Carers Charter at a Carers ACT luncheon event on Wednesday 19 October.

The Charter has three main aims:

- (i) recognising the vital role that carers have in the lives of people they care for,
- (ii) raising awareness about the contribution that carers make in strengthening our community, and
- (iii) supporting the ACT Government's commitment to better acknowledge and respond to Carers' needs.

## CHARTER PRINCIPLES

### **Carers are engaged in matters that affect them as carers.**

- Carers are involved in decisions that have an impact on them as individuals, and are consulted in the development and evaluation of services in our community.

### **Carers are valued and treated with respect and dignity.**

- The knowledge and experience that carers have is recognised and appreciated, and their contribution is acknowledged.

### **Carers are supported to sustain their caring role.**

- Carers are provided with timely information and appropriate services, are able to achieve financial security and are supported through transitions in their caring role.

### **Carers' diverse needs are acknowledged and appropriate supports are provided.**

- The needs of specific carer groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, are often very different. This is acknowledged by carers knowing about, and having access to, appropriate and timely supports that recognise these needs.

### **Carers share a quality of life that is in accordance with community standards.**

- The health and well-being of carers is addressed and they are able to stay connected with their communities.

For further information about the Carer's Charter visit [www.dhcs.act.gov.au](http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au)

# Info Gems

## Calvary eHealth Shared Electronic Health Records

Introducing a new Government initiative that enables Australians to securely store and share important information about their health.



**Calvary eHealth is an electronic health records system which will soon become available for all Calvary patients. In the first quarter of 2012 every resident of the ACT and southern NSW will be able to enrol.**

This initiative is part of the Australian Government's \$466 million investment in the national personally controlled electronic health record system. It will streamline and enhance patient care by linking important healthcare information previously held separately.

With your consent, Calvary eHealth enables the sharing of your health summary with the treating clinicians, specialists, hospitals and practices involved in your care. You are in control because, in partnership with your healthcare professional, you decide what information is available to other healthcare professionals. This information is shared via a secure electronic network.

From 1 July 2012 all Australians can choose to register for an eHealth record via the national system. Once the national system is available Calvary eHealth will be connected to it.

### How will it benefit you?

With your consent, healthcare professionals will be able to access your Calvary eHealth record when treating you. With this information at their fingertips, you won't have to remember your entire health and medical history.

Your health summary will also help to reduce unnecessary duplication and it may avoid treatment delays. In the event you are taken to an emergency department while unconscious and healthcare professionals require immediate access to your record

to treat you, the system will automatically identify the name and details of the healthcare professionals gaining access.

With your consent, participating healthcare providers anywhere in Australia will be able to access an up-to-date summary of your medical information once the national system is available.

### What will your Calvary eHealth record contain?

- A shared health summary (outlined below)
- A summary of each consultation (as agreed with your treating healthcare professional)
- Medical conditions
- Referrals
- Specialist letters
- Discharge summaries following hospital admissions
- Diagnostic reports such as X-ray and pathology results
- Shared care plans agreed between your general practitioner and other participating healthcare professionals

### What is in a shared health summary?

Information may include:

- Name, date of birth, gender, address, contact details and Indigenous status
- Allergies and adverse reactions
- Medicines information
- Immunisations

For more information and details of how to enrol visit [www.calvaryehealth.com.au](http://www.calvaryehealth.com.au)

# Aged Care Complaints Scheme



**In April 2010 the Australian Government released the results of a review of the Aged Care Complaints Scheme as part of the ongoing national health reforms.**

The review made recommendations to improve the operation, timeliness and transparency of the scheme, including for the early resolution of complaints through assessment and prioritisation, mediation and conciliation. Below is a brief summary of key information about the Scheme.

## **WHO CAN MAKE A COMPLAINT?**

Anyone receiving an Australian Government-subsidised residential or community aged care service can raise concerns free of charge. This includes: recipients, partners, family members, friends, representatives, advocates, aged care staff, volunteers, health and medical professionals and carers.

## **WHAT CAN THE SCHEME DO AND NOT DO?**

The Aged Care Complaints Scheme can examine complaints relating to an approved provider's responsibilities under the Aged Care Act 1997. This includes concerns about care, choice of activities, discrimination, catering, communication or physical environment. Complaints are examined regardless of a person's cultural background, disability, gender, sex and gender identity or sexual orientation.

What the service can NOT do is examine concerns about an aged care service that is not subsidised by the Australian Government, or concerns that are not related to an approved provider's responsibilities under the Act. The service cannot say who should make financial, legal

or health decisions (or provide clinical advice) on behalf of a care recipient, or comment on industrial matters such as wages or employment, or ask approved providers to terminate someone's employment. The service cannot provide legal advice, or investigate the cause of death (this is the role of the coroner), or determine whether or not a specific event occurred.

## **HOW CAN I MAKE A COMPLAINT?**

The Scheme recommends that the person raising the issue first approach the approved provider. If the issue cannot be resolved by this means, then that person can call the Aged Care Complaints Scheme on 1800 550 552 to seek support. Complaints can be made anonymously; however, this may limit the ability of the agency to assist. The complaint will be assessed and progressed once received, taking into account factors such as safety, dignity and choice of the care recipient, quality of care and services delivered and the provider responsiveness. This will involve regular consultation between the agency and the person raising the concern. Depending on the complexity of the issue, conciliation, mediation or investigation may be used as a resolution pathway. There may be a fee for mediation.

More information on this scheme can be obtained by calling 1800 550 552, or by visiting:  
[www.agedcarecomplaints.govspace.gov.au](http://www.agedcarecomplaints.govspace.gov.au)

*The above information was adapted from Aged Care Complaints Scheme fact sheet, information booklet and brochure produced by the Department of Health and Ageing.*

# END OF YEAR HOLIDAY PERIOD: OPENING HOURS

During the end of year holiday period, we will be open except on public holidays:

## HOLT OFFICE

**Open:** 28, 29 and 30 December and as per normal from 3 January 2012

**Closed:** 25, 26, 27, 31 December and 2 January



## FRASER HOUSE AND THE COTTAGE

Closed from 6pm on 22 December and reopening on 3 January 2012

## SATURDAY MORNINGS DISCONTINUED

In response to feedback that carers wanted more access to our services, particularly on weekends, three years ago we extended our opening hours to include Saturday mornings. However, despite continual promotion, a very limited number of carers have accessed this Saturday service. We now must advise that we can no longer open on Saturday mornings, effective from 17 December 2011. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

However, we will continue to offer flexible counselling services Monday to Friday – contact 1800 242 636. For carers who need emotional support on weekends, contact Lifeline on 131114; they offer 24-hour crises support service. Carers can still access 24/7 emergency respite by calling our Commonwealth Carelink and Respite Centre on 1800 052 222.

## Office locations

### Carers ACT Northside

(Main Office)  
80 Beaufort Cres, Holt  
Ph (02) 6296 9900  
Fax (02) 6296 9999

### The Cottage

Dementia Respite – Low Care  
117 Denison St, Deakin  
Ph (02) 6285 2082  
Fax (02) 6282 5784

### Fraser House

Disability Respite for  
Mature Carers  
30a Kerrigan St, Fraser  
Ph (02) 6259 9555  
Fax (02) 6259 9333

### Carer Advisory Service

For information, referral, advocacy, problem solving,  
developing options, counselling appointments and workshops.  
1800 242 636

### Commonwealth Respite & Carelink Centre

For information on community aged care and disability  
services in your area and all respite enquiries.  
1800 052 222

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

If undelivered please return to:

Carers ACT Inc.  
80 Beaufort Crescent  
Holt ACT 2615

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