

# Helpful Services & Resources

## Carer Gateway

Carer Gateway is an Australian Government program providing free practical and emotional services, support, and advice for families carers.

1800 422 737 (Mon – Fri, 8.00am – 5.00pm)  
[carergateway.gov.au](http://carergateway.gov.au)

## Mental Health Access Line

A NSW service staffed by mental health professionals that can offer advice, support and referrals for people living with a mental illness and their families and carers. They can put people into contact with the local mental health crisis or acute care team.

1800 011 511 (24/7)

## Beyond Blue

Talk to a counsellor, connect with an online peer support community, speak with a mental health coach, find resources, and more.

1300 224 636 (24/7)  
[beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)

**Mental Health Carers NSW Resources**  
<https://www.mentalhealthcarersnsw.org/resources/>

- [Supporting someone through a mental health crisis](#)
- [Getting a mental health assessment](#)
- [Helping someone with harming behaviours or thoughts of suicide](#)

# Immediate Support

Ring 000 if your life is in immediate danger. For immediate support, you can contact:

## Lifeline (24/7)

13 11 14  
[lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)

## Suicide Call Back Service (24/7)

1300 659 467  
[suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

## 13YARN (24/7)

13 92 76  
[13yarn.org.au](http://13yarn.org.au)

## QLife (3.00pm – 12.00 midnight)

1800 184 527  
[qlife.org.au](http://qlife.org.au)

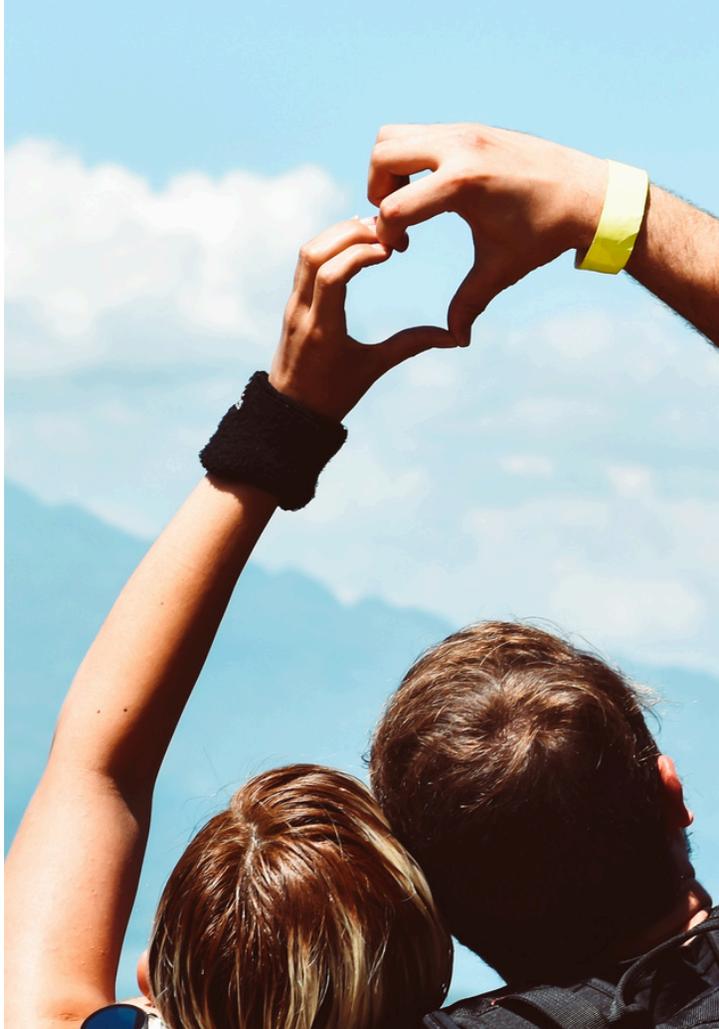
## Kids Helpline (24/7)

1800 55 1800  
[kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au)

# About MHCN

MHCN is the peak body for mental health carers in NSW, and advocates systemically for mental health reform in NSW.

-  02 9332 0777 (Mon - Fri, 9.00am - 5.00pm)
-  [mhcadmin@mentalhealthcarersnsw.org](mailto:mhcadmin@mentalhealthcarersnsw.org)
-  [mentalhealthcarersnsw.org](http://mentalhealthcarersnsw.org)
-  [facebook.com/mentalhealthcarers](https://facebook.com/mentalhealthcarers)
-  [@mentalhealthcarersnsw](https://www.instagram.com/mentalhealthcarersnsw)
-  [mentalhealthcarersnsw](https://twitter.com/mentalhealthcarersnsw)



# Talking To a Loved One About Mental Health Concerns



# Mental Health Carers NSW

# Getting Started

Watching someone you care for struggling with a mental health condition can be difficult. Talking to them about your concerns can be even harder.

Be empathetic and non judgmental. Be specific about what it is that concerns you, ask for their perspective, and try to understand what they are experiencing. Try not to force the issue as it might make the person reluctant to seek support.

Try to come to a common understanding of what is going on, what the person dislikes about what is going on and what you will do about it together and/or separately.

## Useful Phrases

Use 'I' statements such as "I have noticed.... and feel concerned" instead of 'you' statements e.g.,

- "I love you and want to support you".
- "I can see that this is a really hard time for you".
- "I know this might be scary to talk about".
- "Have you thought about seeing your GP or calling support services?"

# Having the Conversation

## Setting the scene

- Find a comfortable and safe place to talk.
- Explain why you are concerned about them.
- Speak honestly to them about your concerns.
- Give the person opportunities to talk openly about how they are feeling.
- Respect how your loved one interprets and sees their symptoms, even if it may be different to your interpretation.
- Be empathetic and listen non judgmentally to their responses.
- Validate the person's feelings.

## Getting help

- If the person feels they do need help managing how they are feeling, discuss and encourage use of professional help such as their general practitioner (GP) or other mental health professionals. You can offer to help make the appointment and go with them to support them if they wish.
- The person can ask their GP for a mental health plan to receive either free, or at a subsidised rate, sessions with a psychologist through Medicare.
- Create a Mental Health Safety Plan together for what to do if your loved one becomes unwell using [Lifeline's Beyond Blue app](#).

## If the person doesn't want help

- If the person doesn't want help, be patient. Acknowledge that it might be hard to seek help, and let them know you're there to help them if and when they need, and you'll check in again soon.
- If you have concerns regarding the person's immediate health and safety, or their mental health deteriorates, seek help from a professional, or ring the Mental Health Access Line (See 'helpful services').
- Remember to seek help and support for yourself.

# Want more info on mental health?



## Wayahead Mental Health Information Line

1300 794 991

(Mon - Fri, 9.00am - 5.00pm)

## Wayahead Mental Health Carer Information Line

1300 850 236

(Mon - Fri, 9.00am - 5.00pm)

## What Not to Do

- Do not force them to talk or pressure them to get help if they do not want to. Rather, let them know you are there if they wish to talk in the future or when they're ready to seek help.
- Everyone's journey and experiences are different. Be mindful and respectful of your loved one's perspective and opinions around their illness.
- Do not blame or make fun of the person. They might already feel guilty and that they are a burden to others. Instead, provide comfort and reassurance.
- Do not say statements suggesting that the person 'snap out of it', 'cheer up', 'you will be fine', etc. This makes it sound like the person is overreacting and should be able to talk themselves out of how they're feeling, when it isn't possible to talk yourself out of a mental health condition.
- Avoid stigmatising words e.g. 'crazy', 'schizo', and other stereotypes. This perpetuates misinformation and stigma in the community towards people living with a mental health condition.