



NSW CARERS STRATEGY 2014-2019 PROGRESS REPORT

FOCUS AREA 4: CARER ENGAGEMENT



OCTOBER 2016

Focus area 4: Carer engagement

Expected outcome in the Strategy

Carers are involved in decisions that affect them and the people they care for

Summary of progress

Carers told us that they wanted to be actively involved in the design and delivery of services.

There are three Strategy projects in this focus area:

- 4.1 Partners in care – health care
- 4.2 Partners in care – community service delivery
- 4.3 Engaging carers in local decision making.

The projects aim to improve the ways we involve carers as partners in the care delivered for their loved ones and also increase their involvement in local decisions about the design and delivery of services.

Project 4.2 Partners in care (community service delivery)

Part 1: Providing training and information about carers to Housing NSW Staff

Lead agency

Carers NSW

Identified need

Many carers in social housing do not identify as carers; that is, they may be 'hidden carers' who do not access the services and supports available to them.

Project description

The project aimed to help people living in social housing with caring responsibilities, and who do not identify as a carer, to access services and supports.

Progress to date

Carers NSW and the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) developed a multi-pronged approach to support carers in social housing to access services and supports:

- Supported Housing NSW staff to better engage and support carers through training and providing quality information about carers.
- Reached out to hidden carers living in social housing (including public housing and community housing) and provided them with support through outreach and carer specific activities.
- Developed an eLearning tool for social housing staff, to increase their awareness about hidden carers: why they are hidden, how to identify them and how to connect them with services and supports.
- Developed a suite of flyers for social housing staff, suitable for distribution to different groups of carers, about the services and supports available to them.

A large number of partners from metropolitan and regional locations were involved in the implementation of this project, including Aboriginal, social housing, Government and community organisations, such as the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence, Northern Links NSW Inc, Samaritans Foundation, Bidwill Uniting, The Junction Works Ltd, Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation and Intereach NSW Inc.

All hidden carer events were held in partnership with other service providers, Tenant Participation Resource Service providers, Community Housing Program providers and Aboriginal organisations.

Key achievements

- Twelve hidden carer events were held in social housing areas across NSW. Approximately 6,700 people attended the events. Carers NSW staff spoke with 1,185 people, provided them with brochures and explained what services are available.
- Support in the form of information and referral was provided to 535 people.
- ELearning module developed and available to social housing staff (FACS and other providers).
- Flyers designed, printed and delivered to 77 FACS housing offices.
- Partner organisations have increased their understanding of who carers are, how to identify hidden carers, and the supports and services that are available to them.

Next steps

FACS provided one-off funding to deliver the project, and will continue to support carers in public housing to be identified and informed.



Part 2: *Providing training to carers about the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)*

Lead agency

Carers NSW

Identified need

With the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) underway, carers require relevant and timely information so that they, and the person they provide care for, can access the services and supports available to them.

Project description

The project aimed to provide information about the NDIS to carers and their families.

Progress to date

Carers NSW developed a half-day workshop *Carers and the NDIS* for carers of people with disability. The workshop provided carers with a general introduction to the NDIS, information about how to support the person they care for to access the NDIS, and how to prepare themselves to communicate their own needs in relation to the NDIS.

Key achievements

- The workshop was delivered from November 2015 – May 2016 in over 20 different metropolitan and regional locations and was well-received by carers. More than 330 people participated in the workshops.
- Questions asked by carers during the workshops are being collated and shared with the Carers NSW policy team, providing a greater understanding of carer needs to inform policy and advocacy work.

“Enjoyed the workshop ... My awareness of NDIS and my function as a carer has increased in regard to accessing the NDIS”

“Didn’t realise we carers had acknowledgement in NDIS”

“Very informative, made it easier to understand. Now on right track. Thank you.”

“We have a lot more to learn but thankful for getting started in a new difficult big change, a big learning curve.”

Feedback from *Carers and the NDIS* workshop participants

Next steps

Steps are being taken to ensure that information about the NDIS reaches carer support groups across New South Wales.

