

## Statement of Carer Rights & Responsibilities

**Rights of carers:** Carers have a right to:

- respect for individual human worth, dignity and privacy.
- information, education, training and support to facilitate the understanding, advocacy and recovery of individuals they support.
- put information concerning family relationships and any other matters relating to the individual to **[insert organisation name]**.
- seek further opinions regarding the diagnosis, treatment and support of the person for whom they care
- place limits on their availability to the person experiencing mental health problems.
- mechanisms of complaint and redress.
- help with their own difficulties which may emerge through the process of caring for or acting as an advocate for a person experiencing mental health problems.

Carers are entitled (unless the consumer or authorised substitute decision-maker has made a current informed decision to with-hold consent) to:

- access to the individual;
- be consulted by **[insert organisation name]** about the nature of support being considered for the individual (*this is mandatory for 'primary carers' under the Mental Health Act section 79*);
- arrange support services such as respite support, counselling and community activities;
- exchange information with those providing support concerning the individual's lifestyles and their relationships with others.

**Responsibilities of carers:** Carers have a responsibility to:

- respect the human worth and dignity of the person who has a mental health problem;
- support treatment and support options for the person which are consistent with their wishes as far as reasonable and not to favour more restrictive care options than are strictly necessary (eg for their own convenience) rather than in the best interests of the consumer;
- consider the opinions of professional and other staff and recognise their skills in providing support for the person who has a mental health problem and;
- co-operate, as far as is possible, with reasonable programs of treatment and support aimed at supporting recovery.

The parent/guardian/carer of a child or adolescent has a responsibility to:

- obtain appropriate professional assistance if they have reason to believe that the child may be experiencing mental health problems

**Reference:** Mental Health statement of rights and responsibilities (1991). *Report of the Mental Health Consumer Outcomes Task Force Adopted by The Australian Health Ministers March 1991*. Australian Government Publishing Service: Canberra.  
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