

# Mental Health Family and Carer Program (FCP) Factsheet

Issued: Oct 2011

## What is the Family and Carer Program (FCP)?

The FCMHP program is funded by NSW Health (Mental Health & Drug and Alcohol Office - MHDAO) to increase the capacity of area health districts to work with families and carers. The program also funds selected Non Government Organisations (NGOs). Local Health Districts are mandated to work with the selected NGOs who are also funded by MHDAO. The FCMHP commenced in HNE in 2006 with Carer Assist as the chosen NGO to work in partnership with HNEMH. Over the past five years the program has grown with staff now spread across the HNE local health district.

## Why does the FCP program exist?

Working collaboratively with families in mental health recovery not only reduces family distress but it also aids the patient's recovery. When families are involved, patients have less hospital admissions, shorter hospital admissions, less drug and alcohol issues and are more likely to gain employment. Evidence also suggests that job satisfaction for the clinician also improves. So working with families is good for everybody.

It can be difficult to know where to begin with families. Families often come from a very different perspective and they are frequently distressed. The FCMHP exists to help staff and services promote family inclusive practice whilst developing referral pathways between Carer Assist and HNEMH. Overall, the aim of the program is to improve outcomes for both the consumers and their families and carers.

## How does the FCP program work?

HNEMH has 2 FTE funded Family Work positions. These positions are filled by 3 social work clinicians working from different sites across HNEMH. The primary functions of Family Workers are to provide family sensitive clinical consultation, training and education, and resource development for mental health clinicians within HNEMH. Family Workers have some capacity to provide direct family work for families with complex needs.

HNEMH FCMHP Family Workers can be contacted directly if you have a specific concern or via a senior social worker.

FCP coordinator at Tamworth: 67677970  
or Armidale: 67669517  
Mater: 40335383 (Weekends)  
Lake Mac: 4904 9000

Carer Assist has 5 offices across the HNE LHD. Mayfield, Taree, Armidale, Warialda and Tamworth. There are 7 Carer Advocates within these offices, a Team Leader and Administrative support. Carer Advocates provide information, education, advocacy and support to families and carers of people with mental health issues.

Carer Assist Staff can be contacted for referrals:

Taree: 65514333  
(HNE Team Leader)  
Mayfield: 49689268  
Warialda: 67291392  
Tamworth: 67613222  
Armidale: 67723211  
EMAIL: [infohne@carerassist.org.au](mailto:infohne@carerassist.org.au)