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# WESTERN SYDNEY PALLIATIVE CARE HANDBOOK

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MAKING EVERY DAY COUNT

*Following the diagnosis of a life-limiting illness, seeking available support for yourself, your loved ones, and your carers may feel overwhelming. The WentWest Palliative Care Community Handbook aims to assist you in accessing the help you need from the time of diagnosis through to the end-of-life period. The handbook details many services available in Western Sydney but is not an exhaustive index. The handbook was developed as part of WentWest's End of Life and Palliative Care program, which aims to improve your access to palliative care at home and enhance your quality of life and that of your loved ones. This handbook does not give professional advice and is not intended to be a substitute for professional advice. However, we hope the information will provide you with greater knowledge that will assist you in those important conversations you will need to have and be able to access the services you need in a timely manner. The development of this handbook is informed by the work undertaken by Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network (PHN) and South Western Sydney PHN.*

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## COMMUNITY PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES

### Western Sydney Local Health District Community Nursing

Western Sydney Local Health District provides community nursing for people with a life-limiting illness requiring supportive care and symptom management. You can self-refer on 1800 600 681 or speak with your GP or other health care professional about a referral.

### Silverchain

Silverchain's community based palliative care service team consists of doctors, nurses, care aides, social workers and counsellors. It provides care to those who are in their last three months' of life and supports people to die in their place of choice. The service provides 24 hour, seven days a week on-call specialist palliative care services at home, including practical support for daily activities, support for families and carers and bereavement support. Visits are provided by Silverchain registered nurses and assistants in nursing, as well as medical practitioners and allied health professional reviews. Clients are also provided with a 24/7 telephone support number. In addition to supporting your clinical needs, Silverchain also offers counselling, pastoral care, social and spiritual care for you and your family. It may also include any equipment needed to provide the care in your home. Referrals to Silverchain are made through your GP or medical specialist.

## SPECIALIST CANCER SERVICES

### Blacktown Cancer and Haematology Centre

*Blacktown Hospital, Marcel Crescent, Blacktown, NSW, 2148*

The Blacktown Cancer and Haematology Centre is one of four major centres of the Sydney West Cancer Network, where a comprehensive range of ambulatory cancer care services are available. An integrated and coordinated service is provided to cancer patients and their carers from a multi-disciplinary team approach. With a separate entry and dedicated parking area, the centre includes welcoming reception, treatment, counselling and education areas. A referral from either your treating specialist or GP is necessary to be seen at the Blacktown Cancer and Haematology Centre.

### The Crown Princess Mary Cancer Centre

*Level 1 Westmead Hospital, Hawkesbury Road, Westmead, NSW, 2145*

The Crown Princess Mary Cancer Centre Westmead is based at Westmead Hospital and serves a large area across Western Sydney. The Crown Princess Mary Cancer Centre Westmead is a purpose built state of the art facility that provides fully integrated research, prevention, diagnostic, treatment, and rehabilitation programs for patients with cancer and their families. A referral from either your treating specialist or GP is necessary to be seen at the Crown Princess Mary Cancer Centre Westmead.

## PRIVATE NURSING SERVICES

### KinCare

KinCare provides nursing services to clients in Western Sydney who wish to access private nursing services. For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

### Regal Home Health

Regal Home Health provides nursing services to clients in Western Sydney who wish to access private nursing services. For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)



# Afterhours Support

## After Hours General Practice

There are many health and medical services that provide after hours care within Western Sydney. These include GPs, pharmacies and allied health providers. Check with your local GP or pharmacist what after hours services they provide. For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

## HealthDirect

People living in NSW receiving palliative care, their carers, and their families can call the HealthDirect Helpline on 1800 022 222 for after hours support. When you call the HealthDirect Helpline, a registered nurse will provide free health advice and information. The service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## NSW Ambulance Authorised Palliative Care Plans

For people who have a diagnosis of a life-limiting illness and who may wish to prescribe treatment for specific symptoms, document resuscitation plans, or guide where they should be admitted if care at home becomes difficult, the Authorised Palliative Care Plan authorises paramedics to provide individually tailored treatment based on the directions documented in their plan by their health practitioner. The plan can be initiated by you or any members of your care team, however, final approval and signing prior to submission to NSW Ambulance is the responsibility of your GP or palliative care team. Once authorised, ambulance care plans are kept by you and reviewed annually.

# Medications and Pharmacy

## Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)

The PBS ensures that Australians have access to affordable medicines. Most medicines available on prescription are subsidised under the PBS. For further information, speak with your GP or pharmacist.

## The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) Safety Net

If you or your family need a lot of medicines in a calendar year, there is a PBS Safety Net to help protect you financially. If you reach the Safety Net threshold, you can apply for a Safety Net card, and then your PBS medicines will be cheaper or free for the rest of the calendar year. For further information call 1800 020 613 or visit:

[LINK](#)

## Blister Packs

Your pharmacist can pack your medications into a weekly blister pack to ensure that you take your medications at the right time and at the right dose. Blister packs make it easy to see if you have taken your medications. Talk to your pharmacist about whether a blister pack may assist you, especially if you take multiple medications a day, have a complicated medication regime, or are inclined to forget or unsure about your medication doses. Ask about any fees associated with this service.

## Home Medicines Review (HMR)

An HMR involves a pharmacist reviewing your medications and making sure that they are used effectively, that you are not experiencing unwanted side effects and that there are no other concerns with your medications. Talk to your GP about an HMR. Your GP will determine if you require a review and arrange a referral to a community pharmacist or a pharmacist of your choice.

## Return Unwanted Medicines (RUM) Program

The RUM program allows you to return unwanted and out of date medicines to your local pharmacy for safe disposal. Contact your local pharmacy and for more information visit:

[LINK](#)



# Accessing Care and Support Services

## The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The NDIS provides support for people aged between 7 and 65 years of age who have a disability. It aims to increase independence and improve quality of life. For enquiries, call 1800 800 110 or email [enquiries@ndis.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ndis.gov.au). For further information about the NDIS, visit:

[LINK](#)

## Dementia Care Navigator

The Dementia Care Navigator program supports people living with dementia, their families and carers, to navigate the health and aged care service sectors and connect with services most suitable for their circumstances. Contact Dementia Australia for more information regarding the program.

[LINK](#)

## My Aged Care

My Aged Care is run by the Department of Health and Aged Care to assist people aged 65 years and older or over 50 years for First Nations people accessing aged care services, including residential aged care and in home care. My Aged Care provides information on the types of care available, the eligibility and assessment process, and the costs associated with your required services. You may be eligible for in home support through the Commonwealth Home Support program or the Home Care Packages Scheme to support you with housework, personal care, meals and food preparation, transport, shopping, allied health, social support and planned respite (giving a carer a break). You will need to have a face-to-face assessment to assess your eligibility. Contact My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 for further information or to arrange an assessment or visit:

[LINK](#)

## Care Finder

Care Finder assists vulnerable older people who cannot arrange services without intensive support and do not have family members or friends who can help. Care Finder services in Western Sydney are fully funded through WentWest, the Western Sydney Primary Health Network.

Care finders can assist their clients with the following:

- Talking to My Aged Care on their behalf and arranging an assessment
- Helping them understand what aged care services are available
- Accessing services for the first time and changing or finding new services and supports
- Attending and providing support at the assessment
- Finding and short listing aged care providers in their area
- Completing forms and understanding aged care service agreements
- Ensuring the client is okay once they start engaging in a service
- Solving other challenges and connecting to supports in the community such as health, mental health, housing and homelessness, drug and alcohol services and community groups

If a person is eligible for care finder services, a care finder organisation will connect them with a care finder. Those calling on behalf of someone who needs to access a care finder must ensure consent from the person to provide their information to the care finder organisation.

See the information below about how to access care finder:

Organisation	Target Population	Contact Details
<a href="#">Aspire4Life</a>	People living in the Blacktown and The Hills LGAs	P: 1300 012 056 E: <a href="mailto:carefinder@aspire4life.com.au">carefinder@aspire4life.com.au</a>
<a href="#">Your Side Australia</a>	People living in the Cumberland and Parramatta LGAs	P: (02) 8405 4484 E: <a href="mailto:carefinder@yourside.org.au">carefinder@yourside.org.au</a>
<a href="#">HammondCare</a>	Older people experiencing homelessness or risk of homelessness	P: 1800 776 112 E: <a href="mailto:HCAHCareNavigationService@hammond.com.au">HCAHCareNavigationService@hammond.com.au</a>
<a href="#">Wesley Mission: Wesley Community Services</a>	Older people experiencing homelessness or risk of homelessness	P: (02) 9263 5177 E: <a href="mailto:carefinders@wesleymission.org.au">carefinders@wesleymission.org.au</a>

# Carer Support

## Carers Gateway

Carers Gateway is an Australian Government program providing support and services to carers. Carer Gateway also provides access to emergency respite if a carer becomes ill or injured. Call 1800 422 737. The line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For further information, visit:

LINK

## Carers NSW

Carers NSW is a state-based service providing information, education and training, resources and referrals for carers living in NSW. Call (02) 9380 4744 or email [contact@carersnsw.org.au](mailto:contact@carersnsw.org.au). For further information, visit:

LINK

## Young Carers Network

Young Carers Network is a Carers Australia initiative to provide information and develop pathways for young carers. It also delivers the Young Carers Bursary program. For further information, call 1800 756 238 or visit:

LINK

## CarerHelp

CarerHelp brings together a range of pathways, tools, videos and information to support carers during the end-of-life process. For further information, visit:

LINK

## Bear Cottage

Bear Cottage provides support and respite for children with life-limiting illnesses and their families. For further information, visit:

LINK

## Australian Death Notification Service

The Australian Death Notification Service is a free government initiative to notify multiple organisations that a person has died using a single online notification. Call 13 77 88 Monday to Friday, 7am to 7pm or email [adns.bdm@customerservice.nsw.gov](mailto:adns.bdm@customerservice.nsw.gov). For further information, visit:

LINK



# Counselling and Support for Grief and Bereavement

## Western Sydney Local Health District Bereavement Counselling Service

Bereavement counselling is available if you would like to access it. Only some people need or want this service. Bereavement counselling can assist you with expressing your grief, understanding your needs, and adjusting to a changed life. Call (02) 9881 1723 or email [WSLHD-BereavementCounselling@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:WSLHD-BereavementCounselling@health.nsw.gov.au)

[LINK](#)

## The Children's Hospital, Westmead, Bereavement Support

The Children's Hospital at Westmead provides support for grieving families. During business hours, you can phone: Bereavement Coordinator on (02) 9845 2617, the Social Work Department at (02) 9845 2641 or the Hospital Chaplains at (02) 9845 3901. The Children's Hospital at Westmead provides individual counselling and group support services. Bereaved parent and sibling groups are held regularly during the year. Groups for parents are available face to face or via telephone. For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

## Lifeline Counselling

Lifeline provides 24-hour phone crisis support and counselling and face-to-face counselling for bereavement and financial crises. Call 13 11 14 which is available 24 hours per day. For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

## Mental Health Access Line

The 1800 011 511 Mental Health Line is NSW Health's 24/7 state-wide phone service which links people with NSW Health mental health services. It is a free service.

It is staffed by trained mental health professionals who offer advice, complete a brief assessment and recommend appropriate care, including referral to NSW Health mental health services. For further information, call 1800 011 511 or visit:

[LINK](#)

## GriefLine

GriefLine is a national not-for-profit organisation that provides free telephone support, online bereavement support groups and forums, grief resources and information, and education and training programs. Call their Helpline on 1300 845 745 Monday-Friday 8am-8pm. For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

## The Compassionate Friends NSW

The Compassionate Friends NSW is a peer support community for grieving parents, siblings and grandparents who have lost a child of any age for any reason. Call the 24-hour National Support line on 1300 064 068 or for further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

## Gather My Crew

Gather My Crew assists people experiencing a crisis by coordinating assistance from family and other support people via an app. For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

## Cancer Council's Information and Support Line

The Cancer Council's information and support line provides expert advice and support by health professionals to people living with cancer, their family, friends, workplaces and health care professionals. For further information, call 13 11 20 or visit:

[LINK](#)

## Solace NSW

Bereavement support group run in the Hills Shire. Contact Kenneth Sutherland at (02) 9519 2820 or via email at [SolaceNSW@gmail.com](mailto:SolaceNSW@gmail.com). For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

## Dementia Australia

If you have dementia or care for someone living with dementia, it's normal to experience a range of good and bad feelings. You're not alone. Dementia Australia offers free, confidential, professional counselling for individuals, families, couples and professional carers at all stages of a dementia journey. For further information, call 1800 100 500 or visit:

[LINK](#)

## CanTeen

CanTeen supports young people aged 15-25 living with cancer and their families access counselling through online chat, phone or email seven days a week. Register online to chat with a counsellor, or email or call 1800 835 932. For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

## Other Services

WentWest commissions mental health services across a range of needs. Speak with your GP regarding accessing these services. For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

# Practical Support in Western Sydney

## MEAL DELIVERY

### Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels provides affordable pre-made meals to the local community. For further information or to find your local provider, call 1300 679 669 or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Tender Loving Cuisine

Tender Loving Cuisine delivers frozen meals to your door. Seniors' discounts are available. See the website for prices. Call 1800 801 200 or email [clientservices@tlcmeals.com.au](mailto:clientservices@tlcmeals.com.au). For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

### Care Food Co

Care Food Co provides home delivered texture modified food in NSW. See the website for prices. Call 1300 251 890 or email [info@carefoodco.com.au](mailto:info@carefoodco.com.au). For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

### Lite n' Easy

Lite n' Easy provides home delivered food in NSW. See the website for prices. For further information, call 13 15 12 or visit:

[LINK](#)

## CRISIS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

### Anglicare

Anglicare can provide practical assistance with food and financial support. For further information, call (02) 8624 8600 or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Salvation Army

The Salvation Army can provide support with financial hardship and housing difficulties. For further information, call 13 72 58 or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Hills Community Aid

Hills Community Aid provides a range of services for people experiencing financial hardship. For further information, call (02) 9639 8630 or visit:

[LINK](#)

### St Vincent de Paul Society

St Vincent de Paul provides practical assistance, including financial aid and support with access to food. For further information, call 13 18 12 or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Wesley Mission

Wesley Mission provides support with accommodation services and housing. For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

### Cancer Council NSW

Cancer Council NSW assists cancer patients experiencing financial hardship to access financial counselling and emergency financial assistance payments. For assistance, call 13 11 20 or for further information, visit:

[LINK](#)

### No Interest Loans Scheme

Loans can be used to purchase household appliances, including medical equipment and support items, for up to \$2000. For further information, call Good Shepherd on 13 64 57 or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Centrelink

Carer Allowance is an income supplement for carers providing daily care for a person with a disability. Carer Payment is available to people who provide significant care for someone with a disability and have no other income. For more information, call Services Australia on 13 27 17 or visit:

[LINK](#)

## TRANSPORT SERVICES

### Community Wheels

Community Wheels has been providing safe and accessible transport for people over 65 years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, transport-disadvantaged residents, culturally diverse individuals, younger people with disabilities and their carers. Available to those in Parramatta and Cumberland LGAs call 8868 1400 for more information or to make a booking or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Active Care Network

Active Care Network provides transport to medical appointments, shopping centres and social outings for people living in the Blacktown local government area who have difficulties accessing transport due to a disability, mobility or health issues; have language challenges that impact access to transportation; have a lack of access to public or private transport; are elderly; do not have a driver's licence, or face other significant barriers to accessing transport. For further information, call (02) 4722 3083 or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Hills Community Care

Hills Community Care helps with your transport needs to attend your medical appointments, visitation to aged care facilities, nursing homes, hospitals and cemeteries to visit loved ones. Hills Community Care also runs weekly shopping trips and outings. A driver or volunteer driver will pick you up and take you home again. For further information, call (02) 9761 7604 or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme

The Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme supports NSW residents who cannot use public transport due to severe and permanent disability. If eligible, you could receive a subsidy of 50 per cent for taxi fares and pay only the remaining fare. For further information, call 13 77 88 or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Mobility Parking Scheme (MPS)

This service provides parking concessions to people with mobility disability. If you are eligible, you will be issued with a licence style card called an MPS permit, which will include a photo and other security features. For further information, call 13 77 88 or visit:

[LINK](#)

## EQUIPMENT AND AIDS

You may be able to access equipment through your home care package, other aged care services, the NDIS or your local palliative care team. Speak to your provider or contact the National Support Services listed in this handbook for further information. If you need to purchase equipment privately, you can contact equipment providers who can assist you.

### Enable NSW

The Aids and Equipment program is an NSW Government initiative to assist eligible people in NSW with specific, short term or ongoing health needs to help them live and participate at home and in their community by providing appropriate assistive technology. For further information, call 1800 362 253 or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Independent Living Specialists

Provider of home care mobility equipment. Visit their store in Wentworthville 6/15 Bransgrove Street, Wentworthville NSW 2145 or call (02) 9633 1155. Alternatively, you can visit their store in Prospect Shop 1c/1 Rowood Road or call (02) 9062 9666. You can order equipment online at their website:

[LINK](#)

### Aidacare

Provider of home care mobility equipment. Visit their store in Blacktown at 1/34 Campbell Street or call (02) 9621 4077. Alternatively, visit their store in Seven Hills at 2/4 Stanton Road or call (02) 8706 2330. You can order equipment online via their website:

[LINK](#)

## OTHER SUPPORT

### NSW Spectacles Program

The NSW Spectacles program funds free glasses and optical aids to financially disadvantaged residents of NSW. For further information, call 1300 847 466, email [info@visionaustralia.org](mailto:info@visionaustralia.org) or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Hearing Services Program

The Hearing Services program ensures eligible Australians with hearing loss can access subsidised hearing services and devices. For further information, call 1800 500 726 or visit:

[LINK](#)

### Continence Aids Payment Scheme (CAPS)

CAPS is an Australian Government scheme that provides a payment to assist eligible people with permanent and severe incontinence to meet some of the cost of their continence products. For further information, call 1800 239 309 or visit:

[LINK](#)

## Planning Ahead Checklist

To assist your loved ones, you may wish to consider the following items:

- Do you have an Advance Care Directive, and have you appointed an Enduring Guardian? (See End of Life Planner and Advance Care Planning sections for assistance). Does your family know your wishes contained within the directive?
- Do they know your preferences regarding burial or cremation and the form of service?
- Has a Will been written, and has an executor been appointed? There may be superannuation taxation implications after death. Seek advice on how to manage these implications best.
- Be aware that bank accounts in your name will be frozen after death and, therefore, cannot be accessed by your partner or family for a period of time. Consider making arrangements to deal with this issue of access to funds.
- A final tax return and a separate tax return for the estate will need to be filed after death.
- Review any life insurance policies to ensure nominated beneficiaries are still correct.
- Make a list of current outstanding debts and the associated lender details (e.g. if you have a mortgage).
- Is someone else's name listed as an additional contact person on utility providers (e.g. electricity)? This ensures that someone else can access the account if need be.
- Compile a list of documents and where they are kept. Documents include birth certificate, marriage certificate, Will, Enduring Power of Attorney, insurance policies, property deeds, real estate details, bank account details, superannuation papers, Medicare card, Veteran Affairs card, medical insurance details, concession cards and any pre-paid funeral investments.
- Social media considerations. If you wish someone to have access to your email accounts later, they will need the account information. Because of privacy laws, they may be unable to access your account otherwise.

## End-of-Life Planner

The NSW Government has developed an End-of-Life Planner kit. Planning for end of life will ensure that your affairs are managed as you want them to be if you lose your capacity to decide for yourself or die. The planner will not provide you with finalised legal documents. Still, it will help you before meeting with a professional advisor or solicitor by breaking down what is required for the legal documents. For further information, visit:

[LINK](#)





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