

# MCT MATTERS

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STAY INFORMED - STAY CONNECTED - STAY ACTIVE AUG 19

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## FIRST AID READY

Knowing what to do in a medical emergency can help make a stressful or confronting situation a little easier to manage and given the time and opportunity, almost anyone can learn some of those basic first aid skills needed should an emergency occur.

Central Coast Council and Men Care Too have worked side by side to create two opportunities for FREE First Aid Training for current and former unpaid, informal family and friend carers as part of local activities for National Carers Week 2019.

Workplace, sporting or community volunteer First Aid training is often undertaken as a requirement of certain roles and Men Care Too believes that there is a strong case to suggest all informal family ...

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## CHANGE ON THE HORIZON

In April next year, the Federal Government starts rolling out a new service delivery model designed for improved access to information and supports for carers, but will it help men in caring roles?

**Y**ears in the making, the Australia wide network of **Carer Gateway** service providers was recently announced with 10 lead organisations, and a range of partners named to deliver roughly 6 times the current supports offered to informal family and friend carers around Australia.

*"Designed by carers, for carers to help them get the support they need early, before reaching crisis point."* is how Minister for Families and Social Services Anne Ruston described the new model in a statement.

The Carer Gateway website and phone line (1800 422 737) were established to provide a single point of contact for carers who are looking for support or information. The 10 lead Not For Profit organisations will receive a combined \$493 million over the next 5 years to implement a range of services that carers will access via

contact with the Carer Gateway. From April 2020, those services include;

- Counselling and Coaching
- Peer Support
- Financial Support
- Emergency Crisis Support

Plus other assistance, for example understanding and engaging with services such as the NDIS and My Aged Care.

Minister Ruston said *"These services give carers access to a range of supports to help reduce stress, build resilience and cope with daily challenges"*

This all sounds great and will certainly go a long way to helping many carers around the country who are not currently receiving any support. There is another perspective on these changes that Men Care Too would like to share ...

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# FIRST AID READY

... and friend carers should be given the chance to become First Aid trained in order to become better prepared to react and help efficiently in a medical emergency.

Supporting someone with an illness, disability or age related health concern can often be complex and include multiple issues, being aware of how to best respond in an emergency can sometimes be a matter of life and death. With some basic First Aid training a carer can gain confidence and skills

to ensure the person they are caring for is well looked after.

The First Aid course offered covers a wide range of topics with online theory covering bites, stings, shock, breathing emergencies, fainting and anaphylaxis, cardiac and medical conditions, resuscitation and legal aspects of first aid.

The practical component includes demonstrating resuscitation techniques, bandaging, slings and splints along with some scenarios to show how you might react to a medical

emergency in the home.

Thanks to a Carers Week Grant from FACS NSW, Men Care Too has also partnered with The Entrance and Erina Men's Sheds to host a 'Thank You' Carers BBQ lunch following each of the training sessions.

For info about the First Aid training on the Central Coast during Carers Week contact Greg on 0400 604 231 or to find out about training opportunities near you phone the Royal Life Saving Society of Australia on (02) 8217 3111.



# CHANGE ON THE HORIZON

Men Care Too was founded in an effort to raise awareness of the 1.2 million plus Australian men in caring roles. Our research article presented at the International Carers Conference in 2017, highlighted issues relevant to men in caring roles and touched more widely on how men are traditionally less likely to seek help or attend support groups.

Societies view and definition of masculinity has been a hot topic around the world for some time now, yet a traditional man is still generally expected to be strong, intelligent, confident and independent. None of these traits or expectations lend themselves well to formal kinds of counselling, advice or peer support.

In the most recent Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, men accounted for 31% of primary carers and make up 50.3% of the 1.84 million sec-

ondary informal carers in Australia. This means that there are a lot of men around the country who are in caring roles, who could likely benefit from some form of support but don't, and Men Care Too believes that is largely due to what services and supports are offered and how they are presented.

Imagine the scenario of ...

A 28year old male working a full time job in construction who comes home from a tough days work to help care for his autistic son and he also helps care for his partners elderly mum who lives with them or ...

A retired mechanic with a bad back and dodgy knees who is caring for his wife who has dementia.

They both do a great job of caring for the people they love, they don't see themselves as 'carers' and they certainly

don't think they need any help because a bloke is meant to be all those things we mentioned earlier.

Traditional services and supports aren't going to help either of these men until the time comes when something goes wrong or it all gets to hard to manage everything, and he is left feeling like a failure because he couldn't manage it all.

Creating male friendly services and supports starts with recognising that men often don't fit within traditional help seeking models currently offered.

Men Care Too is calling on the 10 lead organisations tasked with implementing the Carer Gateway services to look closely at what services they are offering and consider how our construction worker and retired mechanic might be better identified and backed up.



# CARER STRATEGY

A new Carers Strategy for NSW is underway to improve carer wellbeing and supports.



**W**hat one thing do you think could help make a difference in the lives of family and friends who are helping manage the care of someone with illness, disability or age related challenges?

It's a tough question to answer because there is no one thing, but there are no wrong answers either because each caring situation and experience is unique with its own challenges and needs.

The NDIS and Aged Care systems are making progress, albeit it slowly, to improve standards and access to formal care nationally and the Federal Government has committed a large amount of funding for the Integrated Carer Support Service to start developing carer specific services and supports around the country.

With an estimated 900k carers, the state of New South Wales represents roughly a third of all carers in Australia so the NSW Carers Strategy offers an important reference

to many for how government and community can provide support and respect to those in caring roles.

Men Care Too recently attended a Family and Community Services NSW Carer Strategy workshop in Sydney with attendees invited to inform and help shape the new strategy which is due for release in late 2020.

A mix of carers and service providers attended the workshop bringing a wide range of carer experiences to the discussion on existing challenges and possible solutions. The main topics were access to services and supports, health and wellbeing, information, respect and Recognition.

A recurring theme in discussions was the need to improve awareness and recognition of the informal caring role by service providers and the wider community to better identify people in caring roles and offer services and supports early on. Also of great importance is the availability of appropriate supports and information for specific demographics, no two carers are the same and for this strategy to be effective it is important to consider all types of carers.

GP's were also mentioned by quite a few people as having an important role in identifying carers and providing links/education to help.

Keep an eye out for upcoming workshops where you can get involved and visit [careforacarers.nsw.gov.au](http://careforacarers.nsw.gov.au) for updates.



## CUT TO THE POINT

### CALL OF NATURE

Embarrassment or shame can often prevent us from better understanding what to expect or how to manage when our bodies aren't working as well as hoped.

Incontinence is a topic that can be difficult to discuss and because of this many people might be missing out on services and support that could make life a little easier and less embarrassing.

For yourself or someone you care for, there are people who can help make a difference.

**ADVICE:** 1800 33 00 66

### PLAN AHEAD

Dying to Know Day on August 8th was aimed at spreading a message that talking about death is not morbid, weird or taboo but instead should be part of life.

The subject of death and dying is emotional and hard to talk about but a conversation now, can take away some of the stress when the time comes for end of life care and wishes to be carried out.

The D2KDay website has a range of resources to help you start planning ahead for the future at [www.dyingtotalk.org.au](http://www.dyingtotalk.org.au)

**INFO:** 1300 208 582

# RUOK? MATE

Gosford was the first stop for Australian suicide prevention charity RUOK? on their 14,000 km trip around the country visiting 24 different communities.



**O**n September 12th a bright splash of yellow will be seen in communities around our country celebrating RUOK? Day, asking us to trust our gut and start a conversation with someone who might be doing it tough. Thanks to a small grant from **Lifespan Central Coast**, Men Care Too is hosting an event at **Hearts and Minds Barbershop, Toukley** with giveaways, banana bread and tips on how to have conversations that matter.

The RUOK? team have spent the past couple months trav-

elling around the country to highlight some of the signs that show people might need a little support. If someone you know is saying or doing things that are out of character or perhaps they have something challenging going on in their life, asking RUOK? Gives them a chance to open up about how they are doing.

Showing care and concern for someone will let them know they have your support and you can never underestimate the power of simply giving someone your time and attention. RUOK?

## KEY DATES IN 2019 ...

**SEP** | Prostate Cancer Month

**SEP 10** | Suicide Prevention Day

**SEP 10-12** | Men's Shed Gathering

**SEP 12** | RUOK? Day

**OCT 5-11** | Mental Health Week

**OCT 10** | World Homelessness Day

**OCT 13-19** | Carers Week

**OCT 28** | Blue Knot Day

**NOV 11** | Remembrance Day

**NOV 19** | International Men's Day

“ **DON'T LET YESTERDAY TAKE UP TOO MUCH OF TODAY.** ”  
-WILL ROGERS

**NSW Central Coast LHD Carer Support Unit** - 43 205556 (9am-4.30pm, Mon-Fri)

**MensLine Australia** - 1300 78 99 78 (24/7)

**Lifeline** - 13 11 14 (24/7)

**Carer Gateway** - 1800 422 737 (8am-6pm, Mon-Fri)

**National Carerline** - 1800 242 636 (9am-5pm, Mon-Fri)

**QLife (GBTI)** - 1800 184 527 (3pm-12am 7 days)

**Suicide Call Back Service** - 1300 659 467 (24/7)

**Open Arms (Veterans and Families)** - 1800 011 046 (24/7)

**GriefLine** - 1300 845 745 (midday to 3am)



Visit [www.mencaretoo.org](http://www.mencaretoo.org) for more information

All photos from **MCT** and [www.unsplash.com](http://www.unsplash.com)

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