



MENTAL HEALTH  
**carers  
voice**

*Leading change and action with, and for, mental health Carers*

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**October 31**

**E-Bulletin**

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## ***Mental Health Carers Voice***

***How will mental health developments affect you and your family?***

**A Networking & Consulting Forum — Tuesday 19 November**

Find out the latest mental health news and their impacts on you and your family by joining in a conversation with:

- Ms Katrina Bracher, Executive Director, Mental Health, Justice Health, Alcohol & Drugs Service Division
- Mr Richard Bromhead, Manager, Mental Health Policy Unit, ACT Health
- Ms Wendy Kipling, ACT NDIS Taskforce.

This forum will provide you with an opportunity to ask our line-up of experts your questions about current and future health infrastructure developments, mental health reforms, and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

We are delighted that local band *The Rainbow Musos*, who gave a rousing, *ad hoc* medley of 'oldie but goldie' songs to participants at the launch of Mental Health Week, will open the forum.

**Date:** Tuesday 19 November

**Time:** 5.00pm – 8.00pm

**Location:** The Hall, University House, Australian National University, Liversidge Street, Acton

**Cost:** Free. Refreshments will be provided

**RSVP:** 5.00pm Friday, 15 November. Phone Emma on 6296 9952 or email [mhcarers@carersact.org.au](mailto:mhcarers@carersact.org.au). Please let Emma know of any dietary requirements.

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### **Opening Minds Radio Show — The show that talks about mental illness**

Carers ACT has a regular timeslot on the MIEACT *Opening Minds* radio show 2x Community Radio 98.3 FM. The next timeslot is on Tuesday 10 December, 6.00pm – 6.30pm. Please contact Doris ([doris.kordes@carersact.org.au](mailto:doris.kordes@carersact.org.au); ph 6296 9936) if you would like to participate on the show, and engage in a conversation on a topic of interest to mental health carers that you would like to share with a wider audience.

[Click here](#) for the Opening Minds program.

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## ***Latest news from Janet Milford, ACT representative, National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum***

### **Elephant in the Room in Canada**

One of the most effective methods of reducing stigma is to display information visibly, to educate, promote awareness and encourage discussions. Mood Disorders Society of Canada have new workplace and school anti-stigma posters available for printing from their website. Please feel free to [download them](#) and post them in visible areas.

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### **National Disability Insurance Scheme News — ‘Choice and Control’ Webinar**

Choice and Control: What do these terms mean to people with disability, their families and carers and those in the disability sector?

The first NDIS interactive online video webinar will have a panel of speakers who will share their personal reflections on the meaning of choice and control, and there will be an opportunity for

you to ask questions and join the discussion.

The Webinar will take place on Wednesday **6 November from 1.00 pm – 2.00 pm (AEDT)**. To connect to the webinar, you will need to log on to the Theatre Video Platform to view the event from your computer and we will make these details available as soon as possible. You can use the #NDISwebinar hashtag to send through your questions live. If you would like to **register your attendance** and submit a question on the topic of choice and control for the Webinar, please contact [enquiries@ndis.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ndis.gov.au) or telephone 1800 800 110.

More information about how to connect to the Webinar on the day will be made available soon. Please visit the National Disability Insurance Scheme [Facebook page](#) and [website](#) or you can telephone 1800 800 110.

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### **Launch of A Contributing Life — The 2013 National Report Card on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention**

**Date:** Wednesday 27 November

**Time:** 11.00am – 1.30pm

**Location:** The University of New South Wales, Scientia Conference & Events Centre, Leighton Hall, Sydney

**RSVP:** 13th November to [rsvp@mentalhealthcommission.gov.au](mailto:rsvp@mentalhealthcommission.gov.au) or on 0413 623 227

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## **Carers ACT**

### **Disability ACT — Enhanced Service Offer Planners at Carers ACT**

The Enhanced Service Offer grants are designed to assist people who have a disability, due to a physical, cognitive, intellectual, psychosocial or sensory impairment and their families to be ready for the commencement of National Disability Insurance Scheme, which will commence in July 2014 in the ACT, and to provide support for them in the interim. There are three types of Grants available, Aids, Equipment and Minor Modifications, Quality of Life and Flexible Support and Services Grants.

The second round of the Enhanced Service Offer grants has opened, and will close on 5.00pm Friday 8 November 2013.

Planners from the Enhanced Services Offer team will be spending every Tuesday between 1 October – 5 November 2013 at Carers ACT Holt office to assist carers to fill in and lodge their applications for the grants. Appointments will be essential. The Planners would appreciate it if carers, recipients and their families can consider the supports, services or items that they would like to apply for, and the difference it will make in their lives, prior to coming to the

appointment.

**Date:** 5 November

**Time:** By appointment

**Venue:** Carers ACT, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt

**RSVP:** Bookings are essential. Phone Elaine on 6296 9924 or Carers ACT Reception on 6296 9900 to make an appointment.

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### Self Esteem & Assertiveness for Women Carers — 6 week course

This course is for women who are caring for someone with a disability or mental health issue, who would like to increase their self esteem and express themselves with confidence. The course will cover:

- The difference between self-perception, self-awareness and self-esteem
- Past and present factors that influence self-esteem and self-acceptance
- Making your inner critic work for you rather than against you
- Overcoming negative self-talk and increasing self-value
- Strategies to discover and enhance your positive feelings and wellbeing
- Accepting and befriending your emotions
- What assertiveness means, and
- Communicating with clarity and respect for self and others.

**Date:** 11, 18 and 25th November and 2, 9, and 16 December

**Time:** Mondays 9.30am – 12.00pm

**Venue:** Carers ACT, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt

**RSVP:** Bookings are essential. For more information or to register your interest, contact Helen Malcomess at Carers ACT on 6296 9900.

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### Mental Health Carers Connection Program — Gathering at Murramarang National Park

The newly launched Mental Health Carers Connection Program provides assistance to people in the North of Canberra caring for someone with a mental illness. In addition to assistance such as respite support, advice, referral and counselling, this program also offers social support and peer support events such as quarterly mingle evenings and biannual 'gatherings'. These gatherings are specifically designed to provide mental health carers with a chance to experience time away from their caring role and meet with other carers in a relaxing setting.

The first scheduled gathering will be held on the 20–21 of November at Murramarang National Park and an *expression of interest* to attend this gathering is available on the link below or

through the Carers ACT website.

**Date:** Wednesday 20 – Thursday 21 November

**Venue:** Murramarang National Park

[Click here](#) for the expression of interest to attend. Applications close 5 November, *so get in quick.*

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### **On Course for Carers — Herbal & Prescription Medication, Dru Yoga for health & wellbeing**

Naturopath Cathy will explain possible interference with medication absorption when herbs, supplements and medications are taken together. Shirley will lead carers in a refreshing yoga session.

**Date:** Thursday 21 November

**Time:** 10.00am – 12.00pm

**Venue:** The Carers Hub, Carers ACT, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt

This event is free for family carers residing in the ACT. To register please call 6296 9908 or email [rsvp@carersact.org.au](mailto:rsvp@carersact.org.au)

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### **Mental Health Carers — Southside Support Group**

This is a support group for family members and friends caring for someone living with mental health issues. The group meets on one Wednesday evening most months.

**Date:** Wednesdays 27 November, 18 December (no groups in January or July)

**Time:** 6.00pm – 8.00pm

**Location:** Woden Smith Family, Corner of Launceston and Easty Streets, Woden

For further information please call 1800 242 636 or email [rsvp@carersact.org.au](mailto:rsvp@carersact.org.au)

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### **Mental Health Carers — Northside Support Group**

This is a support group for family members and friends caring for someone living with mental health issues. The group meets on the second Tuesday of each month.

**Date:** Tuesdays 12 November, 10 December (no groups in January or July)

**Time:** 5.00pm – 7.00pm

**Location:** Carers ACT, 80 Beaurepaire Crescent, Holt

For further information please call 1800 242 636 or email [rsvp@carersact.org.au](mailto:rsvp@carersact.org.au)

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### **Mental Health Carers Respite — 1800 052 222**

The Mental Health Respite Program provides flexible respite and other supports to meet the individual needs of carers of people with severe mental illness, autism or intellectual disabilities and their families. Services include respite options based on needs assessments, information and referral, links to education programs, counselling, peer support, advocacy services and social and recreational activities. Please call 1800 052 222 or email

[mentalhealth.respite@carersact.org.au](mailto:mentalhealth.respite@carersact.org.au). The Mental Health Respite program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs. For more information about support available under this Program, visit the Carers ACT [website](#).

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### **Counselling at Carers ACT — Supporting Family Carers — 1800 242 636**

Did you know that Carers ACT can provide short-term counselling for family carers? Our counselling service can help you manage difficult situations and balance caring in your life. Qualified counsellors are located on site in Holt and Woden to provide carers with confidential and professional face-to-face and telephone counselling. Call the Carer Advisory Service to make an appointment on 1800 242 636. Click here for more information on [support that Carers ACT counsellors can offer mental health carers](#).

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## **ACT News**

### **ACT Mental Health Consumer Network — 2013 Annual General Meeting**

This year's guest speaker is Dr Michelle Banfield: Research Fellow at ACACIA (ACT Consumer and Carer Mental Health Research Unit) and Member of the Consumer Advisory Group overseeing the National Consumer Organisation.

Nominations for the Network's Board are welcomed from both Primary and Associate members. Primary membership is free and automatically granted to all people with lived experience of mental illness, past or present, upon receipt of a completed membership form which can be found at <http://www.actmhcn.org.au/join-us.html>. Associate membership is also available at the same page however as Associate memberships require Board endorsement, it will not be possible for newly applying Associates to join the Board until after the December 2013 Board meeting.

**Date:** 19 November

**Time:** 12.30 – 3.00pm

**Venue:** Meeting Room 6, Level 1 Griffin Centre , 20 Genge Street, Canberra City

**RSVP:** Please RSVP for catering purposes by Friday 15 November. Advise us of any dietary requirements you may have.

The 2013 Annual General Meeting information package is now available on the Network's website at <http://www.actmhc.org.au/>

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### **ACT Medicare Local — New anxiety and depression program**

NewAccess is an early intervention program intended to provide easily accessible, free and quality services for people with mild to moderate depression and anxiety who are currently not accessing mental health services. The program aims to support hard to reach groups. Despite one in ten Canberrans living with anxiety or mild depression, only one in four men access treatment.

NewAccess is a program funded by *beyondblue* and Movember. ACT Medicare Local is the first Medicare Local in Australia to run the program.

[Click here](#) to read Medicare Local's latest eNewsletter.

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### **Invitation to consultation on the Improving the Management of Cognitive Impairment using the NSQHS Standards Project**

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (the Commission) is currently undertaking a project to improve the management of cognitive impairment using the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards. During the first phase of this project, the Commission will produce a draft resource, which aims to guide services in improving the care of people with cognitive impairment.

The Commission will soon begin consultation, focusing on how well the draft resource

- Raises awareness of cognitive impairment as a safety and quality issue;
- Provides a useful guide to actions, strategies and resources to improve safety and quality; and
- Demonstrates how actions can be mapped to the current NSQHS Standards.

Feedback will be sought through a national round of consultation forums and an online consultation survey.

The consultation forums will be held for both consumers and health care providers in all States and Territories between **Tuesday 29 October** and **Wednesday 4 December**.

The online consultation survey will be available for completion between **Monday 14 October** and **Friday 6 December**.

To express your interest in attending a consultation forum, please complete the online expression of interest form: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ciconsultationregistration>

For further information about the project and consultation, please visit:  
<http://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/our-work/cognitive-impairment/consultation/>

Please do not hesitate to contact the project team by emailing [cognitive.impairment@safetyandquality.gov.au](mailto:cognitive.impairment@safetyandquality.gov.au) or phoning (02) 9126 3648 if you have any questions or require further information.

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### PANDSI Twilight Seminar

The topic of this year's PANDSI Twilight Seminar is Survive and Thrive: building strong family relationships. With keynote speaker Michael Moore and other speakers including Dr Emma Adams, Angela Freeman and Alison Christie.

**Date:** Wednesday 13 November  
**Time:** 5.30 – 9.00pm  
**Venue:** Bradman Room, Manuka Oval

[Click here](#) for the Twilight Seminar flyer and registration form. For more information on this event and PANDSI please visit [www.pandsi.org](http://www.pandsi.org)

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### Mental Health Carers Coffee & Chat

An informal monthly get together for anyone who has a family member or friend experiencing mental health problems. No agenda, just coffee and conversation.

**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday each month  
**Time:** 12.30 – 2.00pm  
**Venue:** CIT Woden café canteen area, C Block, Ainsworth Street, Phillip

Buy good coffee from the café, BYO or buy your lunch.

For more information, contact CIT Skills for Carers on 6207 3628 or [CarerSkills@cit.edu.au](mailto:CarerSkills@cit.edu.au)

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### ImagineMore conference

This conference is for individuals and families who are experiencing disability and mental illness, friends and service providers.

Keynote speakers:

- Bob Rhodes (UK) providing a workshop about 'What really matters' and reflections from the UK direct payments and personal budgets scheme.
- Michael Kendrick (Canada/USA) discussing how to connect with communities, our values and personal fulfilment.

**Date:** Wednesday 27 – Thursday 28 November

**Venue:** Australian Catholic University

Follow this link to register <http://imaginemore.org.au/november-conference/>

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## 9<sup>th</sup> National Seclusion and Restraint Forum

One of the core functions of the Safety and Quality Partnership Standing Committee (SQPSC) is the allocation of and support to jurisdictions to hold an annual national seclusion and restraint reduction forum. National seclusion and restraint reduction forums provide a networking opportunity for mental health staff with an interest in reducing seclusion and restraint across Australia and maintain momentum in the changing of culture and practice. National seclusion and restraint reduction forums additionally identify ongoing areas of continuous improvement and innovation in this arena.

The ACT was asked in November 2012 by the Safety and Quality Partnership Standing Committee to host the 2013 Forum. The theme of this year's Forum is ***'Reducing the trauma with least restrictive practice: Why it matters to walk the talk'***.

The desired outcomes of the Forum are:

- A continued reduction in the number of seclusion episodes
- The reduction of aggressive behaviour by any person in mental health settings and minimisation of the use of seclusion and restraint
- Best practices for the reduction and where possible the elimination of seclusion and restraint, and
- An increased focus on understanding and reducing areas of restraint in Health Services beyond mental health.

**Date:** Thursday 28 – Friday 29 November

**Venue:** Shine Dome, Australian Academy of Science

[Click here](#) to view the flyer. [Click here](#) to access the registration form. [Click here](#) for a list of nearby accommodation.

If you have any further queries email [Elizabeth.medley@act.gov.au](mailto:Elizabeth.medley@act.gov.au) or phone 6205 2154.

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## Free Training Course: Engaging People to Talk About Problem Gambling Issues

Many people with gambling problems seek help for other problems such as financial difficulties, relationship, housing, mental health or drug and alcohol problems before seeking help for their gambling problems. It is likely that community sector workers in these non gambling specific areas will encounter people with gambling problems. This training will increase awareness and

skills for these workers equipping them to help their clients begin the process of change.

The workshop will cover the following topics:

- Recognising problem gambling
- Raising the issue of gambling
- Assessment of gambling and related concerns
- Measuring readiness for change in relation to gambling
- Working with reluctance and resistance to changing gambling
- Overview of best practice in the gambling context
- Gambling specific referral options.

**Date:** Thursday 28 November  
**Time:** 9.00am – 4.30pm  
**Venue:** CIT, Ainsworth Street, Phillip

Tea/Coffee, morning tea and lunch are provided.

For more information or to book a place at the course for please contact Alex Ingham at the ACT Gambling and Racing Commission on 6207 0305 or email [alexander.ingham@act.gov.au](mailto:alexander.ingham@act.gov.au)

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## *National & International News and Research*

### **Carers in Higher Education**

The Disabilities & Carers Collective from the Student's Representative Council of the University of Sydney has produced a booklet to highlight the issues affecting student carers.

This valuable resource outlines what it is to be a student who has a caring role, how there is a need for greater recognition and awareness of student carers, and how universities can better support them, thereby encouraging greater participation in tertiary education.

Carers Australia CEO, Ara Cresswell, wrote the introduction for this great resource, which can be downloaded [here](#).

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### **National Disability Insurance Scheme**

[Click here](#) to view the latest issue of the National Disability Insurance Scheme News.

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### **New Website for the National Mental Health Consumer Organisation Establishment Project**

The NMHCO Establishment Project Website has had a major over haul and is now up and running! The new website has a complete new look and better functionality to help better communicate, and get feedback on, important work happening to establish the new Organisation.

### **The Website**

Visit the website to see the new look! It can be found at the same address <http://mhconsumer.org.au>.

### **NMHCO Establishment Project Brochure**

An information brochure has been developed to provide a general overview on the NMHCO Establishment Project and is [available in PDF to download from the new website](#) or by [clicking here](#). Please feel free to print and distribute the brochure to your networks.

NMHCO would love to receive feedback on the Project. Feel free to email [enquiry@mhconsumer.org.au](mailto:enquiry@mhconsumer.org.au), and encourage your friends and colleagues to sign up for the registered interest list to receive all the latest details and updates.

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### **Noetic Solutions — NDIS Survey**

You are invited to participate in a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) survey.

Whether you are someone with a disability, a carer or a disability services provider, this survey is an opportunity to share your experience and opinion regarding the NDIS and its implications. The intent of this survey is to understand your current level of knowledge of the NDIS and identify how effectively information about the NDIS has been communicated. The survey results will support Noetic Solution's goal to raise awareness in the Australian community of the Scheme and thereby, ensure that the NDIS stays relevant and at the forefront of national discussion.

The NDIS survey is 14 – 17 questions long and will take approximately 10 – 15 minutes to complete. All participant information will remain confidential and anonymous, and data collected across the country will be aggregated. The outcomes of this survey will be made freely available once the results have been collected and further analysed.

If you wish to have further information about the study, please feel free to contact Tina Dilegge at (02) 6234 7777 or [tina.dilegge@noeticgroup.com](mailto:tina.dilegge@noeticgroup.com).

Your consideration and willingness to complete the survey will be invaluable to us. Thank you in advance for your participation. To begin the survey, please [click here](#).

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### **Churchill Fellowship**

A Churchill Fellowship aims to provide an opportunity for Australians to travel overseas to

conduct research in their chosen field that is not readily available in Australia.

A Churchill Fellowship is a remarkable opportunity to travel overseas for a minimum of four and a maximum of about eight weeks to conduct research into a topic that you are passionate about. It is for anyone who feels that they have exhausted all research opportunities within Australia and would like to see what overseas currently has to offer. Every application is assessed based on merit, a demonstrated need for the proposed research, the perceived benefit to Australia and a willingness to share the overseas findings and knowledge with the Australian community.

To be eligible to apply for a Churchill Fellowship you must:

- be an Australian Citizen over the age of 18
- not be completing tertiary studies directly related to the topic of your proposed project
- have experience in and commitment to the field of your project
- have a worthy project that requires overseas investigation
- be willing to disseminate the results of your research to the broader Australian community, and
- not have been awarded a Churchill Fellowship in the past.

Applications close Monday 28 February. Please visit <http://www.churchilltrust.com.au/>, email [churchilltrust@bigpond.com](mailto:churchilltrust@bigpond.com), or telephone 1800 777 231 (freecall) or 6247 8333 for further information.

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### **Our Consumer Place**

A fantastic range of new resources have been produced by the team at Our Consumer Place, in partnership with Our Community.

The website is a resource centre run entirely by consumers and provides information, training, support and advice to consumer-developed groups and projects. Currently available for download is 'The Consumer Movement in Australia: A memoir by Merinda Epstein'. Merinda has been working as an advocate and activist in mental health for 27 years and her memoir covers her personal experiences of being bullied and some of the big questions that still plague both mental health and the consumer movement.

[Click here](#) to access 'The Consumer Movement in Australia: A memoir by Merinda Epstein'.

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### **National Mental Health Core Capabilities**

If you are a consumer or carer or work with a community, private or public mental health service and are interested in mental health workforce capabilities, Health Workforce Australia is seeking your feedback on their draft version of the National Mental Health Core Capabilities

document. The document aims to articulate the common behaviours needed across the mental health workforce for the delivery of high quality care that supports the needs and expectations of people using services, their families and carers. Comment will be sought through focus group workshops during November. Places will be limited so people are encouraged to register early.

[Click here](#) for a fact sheet on the Mental Health Workforce Reform Program. [Click here](#) for further information or to register.

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## *In the media*

### **The Sunnyboy**

Don't miss an important documentary being broadcast on 3 November at 9.25pm on ABC1. The Sunnyboy follows 50 year old Jeremy Oxley, lead singer of the much lauded 80's band the Sunnyboys as he emerges from a 30 year battle with schizophrenia. The Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW was a partner in the documentary and invites everyone with an interest in the mental health sector to watch inspiring story.

[Click here](#) for more information.

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### **Life, Hope, Dreams**

The inspiring stories of two remarkable women who've overcome huge odds to realise their own dreams in later life...

Karen and Rita are ordinary women with extraordinary stories to tell. With courage and compassion, both have faced immense personal challenges, and have emerged to embark on new chapters in their lives. Although very different, their stories bear testimony to the resilience and power of the human spirit. Compass charts their remarkable journeys. Karen is a carer.

[Click here](#) to view the full interview and to download the video.

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### **Caring for the carers**

Sally and Michael Koodiaroff have taken it in turns to care for each other after serious medical episodes.

[Click here](#) to read the full article and listen to the radio special on 666 ABC Canberra.

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### **Links to current media that may be of interest to carers**

- [Funding boost for carers](#)
- [Counting the true cost of dementia](#)
- [‘A worthy life’](#)
- [Mental health gap must be addressed](#)
- [Mental health unit unveiled](#)
- [Uni student John Stewart defies hardships](#)
- [Video resources to support dementia](#)
- [Serious games to increase dementia care](#)
- [Extraordinary mum commended at Parliament House ceremony](#)
- [Mental health bill goes to WA parliament](#)
- [Mental health Bill to be introduced to parliament to provide stricter controls on the use of ECT](#)
- [Why mental health bed cuts make me ashamed to work for the NHS](#)
- [Laws introduced in WA allow teenagers to consent to electric shock treatment](#)
- [We will deliver NDIS: Abbott government](#)
- [Beyond Blue says skipping a lunch break puts mental health at risk](#)
- [A focus on culture does little to address mental health needs](#)
- [Early intervention key to getting a grip on mental health woes](#)
- [Healthy, wealthy, but Australians could be happier](#)
- [Mental Health Minister rejects calls for more acute beds for children](#)
- [Establishing a culture of trust heralds exciting recovery results: Finland’s ‘Open Dialogue’ approach](#)

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***If you or someone you know may be at risk of suicide contact Lifeline 131 114, beyondblue 1300 224 636, or Salvo Care Line 1300 363 622.***

***The opinions expressed in this E-Bulletin do not necessarily reflect the opinions and views of Carers ACT.***

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[www.carersvoice.com.au](http://www.carersvoice.com.au)