

5. Carer Counselling and Support Groups

Carers of people with dementia can also benefit from:

- Attending a carer support group
- Talking with a counsellor

CARER SUPPORT AND COUNSELLING

Counselling involves discussing important issues with a counsellor (such as a psychologist or clinical psychologist). A counsellor can help you to explore any challenging issues or emotions and work towards positive change. A session usually runs for an hour. The number of sessions will vary, depending on your goal and the counselling approach.

How can counselling be helpful?

Counselling helps you to express and better understand your thoughts and feelings in a non-judgemental environment. Common emotions experienced by carers of people with dementia include:

- Sadness and grief associated with changes in the person with dementia and your relationship with them
- Loss associated with plans for the future that may no longer be possible
- Frustration, annoyance, and/or anger associated with managing daily interactions
- Resentment towards other family and friends due to feeling unsupported
- Guilt about not being able to meet all of the person with dementia's needs
- Guilt about experiencing 'negative' emotions towards the person with dementia.

If you need support or counselling, you can contact the following services:

Alzheimer's Australia Carer Counselling (Wollongong)

Telephone: 1800 100 500

Carers NSW Carer Line

Telephone: 1800 242 636

CAPAH Multicultural Services (Spanish Carers Groups)

Telephone: 4297 7546

Carer Counsellor/Social Worker – Illawarra (ISLHD)

Telephone: 4232 0153 or 1300 792 755

CatholicCare's CALD Counselling, Support and Advocacy program

Telephone: 4227 1122

Centrelink Carer Payment and Carer Allowance

Telephone: 132 717

Counselling/Support/Advocacy – Wollongong (CatholicCare)

Telephone: 4254 9330 or 4227 1122

Counselling/Support/Advocacy – Nowra (Anglicare)

Telephone: 4254 9330 or 4227 1122

Dementia Advisory Service – Illawarra (ISLHD)

Telephone: 4296 6747

Dementia Advisory Service – Shoalhaven (ISLHD)

Telephone: 4422 9583

Information/Support/Advocacy – Shellharbour (SCG Community Care Programs)

Telephone: 4295 5532

Multicultural Health Carer Support Groups provided with an interpreter – Illawarra (ISLHD)

Telephone: 4221 6770

Multicultural Dementia Carer Support Group and Care Worker (Cringila)

Telephone: 4276 4364

Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS)

Telephone: 131 450

Younger Onset Dementia Key Worker

Telephone: 8875 4694 or 1800 100 500

CARER SUPPORT GROUPS

Support groups can assist you to:

- Meet other people in similar situations who might share their positive and challenging experiences
- Learn practical strategies and techniques to manage different situations
- Learn about local dementia respite and other services
- Talk about the different emotions associated with caregiving, such as loss and frustration.

Finding a carers group

Different groups can be helpful at different stages. For example, when you start caring, a structured support group with an educational component can be helpful, whereas the social components of a group may become more important at a later stage.

Support groups in the Illawarra Shoalhaven are listed below. Contact the group coordinator and discuss whether you think the group will suit you and your needs.

Bay and Basin Carers Group

Where: Bay and Basin Community Centre

When: 1pm – 3pm Last Thursday of the month

Telephone: 4443 3434

Carer's Café Kiama

Where: Joyce Wheatley Community Centre, Hindmarsh Park

When: 1-3pm Second Friday of the month

Telephone: 4232 0475

Corrimal Dementia Carers Support Group

Where: Bottlebrush Room, Corrimal Community Centre, Short Street, Corrimal

When: 10.30am-1pm Second Wednesdays of the month

Telephone: 4229 5926

Greek Carers Support Group

Where: Cringila Community Health Centre - Cringila Multi-Purpose Centre,
Lake Avenue, Cringila

When: 10-12pm Third Wednesday of the month

Telephone: 4221 6790

Italian Dementia Carers Support Group

Where: Illawarra Builders Club, 61 Church St, Wollongong

When: 10-12pm Fourth Wednesday of the month

Telephone: 4221 6789

Kiama Open Carer Support Group

Where: IRT Harbourside Common Room, 30 Terralong St, Kiama

When: 10am-12noon Third Thursday of the month

Telephone: 4232 0475

Macedonian Carer Support Group

Where: Port Kembla Senior Citizens Centre, Allan Street Port Kembla

When: 10am-12pm Second Wednesday of the month

Phone: 4275 2266 (Head Office)

Multicultural Dementia Carer Support Group

Where: Location changes monthly, please call to confirm.

When: 10-12pm Second Wednesday of the month

Telephone: 4276 4364

Multicultural Memory Loss Carer Support Group

Where: Illawarra Yacht Club, 1 Northcliffe Dr, Warrawong NSW 2502, Australia

When: 10-12 Third Tuesday of the month

Telephone: 4276 4364

Nowra Carers Support Group

Where: 39 Holloway Road, Nowra

When: 10.30-12.30 Fourth Wednesday of the month

Telephone: 4421 0975

Open Carer Café Peer Support Group

Where: Hideaway Café, Church Street, Wollongong

When: 10.30am Second Tuesday of the month

Telephone: 4254 9339

Portuguese Carer Support Group

Where: South Coast Portuguese Association 129 Flagstaff Rd Warrawong

When: 11-1pm First Tuesday of the month

Telephone: 4274 3664

Serbian Carer Support Group

Where: Church Hall, 82 Kenny Street Wollongong (please ring to check prior to attending)

When: 10am-12pm First Monday of the month

Telephone: 4275 2266 (Macedonian Welfare Association of NSW Inc.)

Ulladulla Carers Support Group

Where: Typically held at Ulladulla Community Health Centre Princes Highway, however call to confirm as group is also held in alternate locations

When: 12.30pm-3pm Third Monday of the month

Telephone: 4455 5366

Warilla Dementia Carers Support Group

Where: Warilla Bowling & Recreation Club, Jason Ave, Barrack Heights.

When: 10am-12pm First Tuesday of the month

Telephone: Call Carunya on 4297 1011

Warilla Dementia Carer Support Group

Where: Carunya Dementia Day Therapy Centre, Conference Room, Blg 6/14 Belfast Ave, Warilla

When: 10am, every Tuesday

Telephone: 4297 1011

Wollongong Dementia Carers Support Group

Where: Illawarra Master Builders Club, Church St, Wollongong

When: 10.30-12pm Fourth Tuesday of the month

Telephone: call Carunya on 4297 1011

Younger Onset Dementia Carers Support Group

Where: Community Gateway Hub, Wollongong or Carunya, Warilla

When: 10-12pm, First Thursday every month

Telephone: RSVP to Kate Troy on 1300 657 473

Younger Onset Dementia Support Group Shoalhaven

Where: Coastal Indulgence Café, 107-109 Princes Hwy Milton

When: 10-12pm Third Wednesday of the month

Telephone: 8875 4694