

Respite Intake and Allocation Pilot

A centralised referral and allocation system for disability respite in the Nepean region.

INFORMATION FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS AND CARERS

BACKGROUND

RIAP is an initiative of a group of respite service providers operating in the Nepean region. In 2002 - 2003 a number of respite service providers gathered to discuss the state of respite care provision in the Nepean area. The following issues regarding the provision and receipt of respite were identified:

- Many people with a disability were on multiple waiting lists for regular respite services
- Inequalities existed within the distribution of respite services with some carers receiving multiple services whilst others received little if any respite care
- The referral process for carers requesting respite was often complicated and frustrating
- Carers were undergoing multiple assessments
- Confusion as to the whether HACC funded respite or DSP respite was most suitable for carers' needs.

In December 2003 it was decided to investigate the possibility of establishing a process similar to the TAB 2 model that was operating in the Inner West. The Inner West service providers have been most co-operative and shared both their time and resources with us. Once in place it is hoped this project will provide a single-entry point for carers of a person with a disability requesting respite in the Nepean region.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

By streamlining the referral process through a single point of entry RIAP aims to:

1. Improve accessibility to funded respite services for carers of a person with a disability in the Nepean region (incorporating the Penrith, Hawkesbury and Blue Mountains local government areas)
2. Reduce the confusion and intrusion for carers
3. Reduce assessments and administration work for respite service providers
4. Bring together all funded respite providers in the region to work collaboratively toward achieving an accessible and equitable process for respite provision
5. Ensure a more equitable distribution of funded respite services
6. Gather and collate data relating to the respite needs of carers of a person with a disability
7. Evaluate the resources required to maintain RIAP on an ongoing basis

HOW RIAP WILL WORK:

There are two stages involved:

Stage 1: The Referral Process

1. All requests for respite for carers of a person with a disability living in the Nepean region are to be directed to the Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre Nepean (CCRC). This is via Freecall **1800 059 059**. The staff at the CCRC will complete the CCRC Intake Form over the phone.
2. Carers, relevant agencies, service providers etc may make referrals.
3. The CCRC will determine at initial contact the nature of the referral, i.e. whether the request for respite is an emergency, one-off or longer term need. If it is short-term or emergency only the CCRC will provide the respite care.
4. All referrals for longer-term respite will be recorded by the CCRC in a central database and presented at the next allocation meeting.

Please note:

1. Referrers must have the carer's permission before making a referral
2. Consent will be obtained from carers before information is presented at the allocation meeting – if possible written consent, otherwise verbal.
3. The CRC will use telephone interpreter services where necessary

Stage 2: The Allocation Process

1. Allocation meetings are to be held bimonthly on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 2pm. (27th July, 28th September, 23rd November, 2004 and 25th January, 22nd March and 24th May 2005.)
2. The allocation meeting comprises of a representative from each funded respite service provider in the region. If people cannot attend a meeting they should send a representative or email the CCRC details of availability of places within different respite programs.
3. A representative of the CCRC will facilitate the allocation meeting.
4. Each completed CCRC Referral Form is presented at the allocation meetings for consideration.
5. Each referral is considered carefully and matched to the most appropriate service provider based on the services entry criteria, availability of placements, any preferences stated. Names are not included in the initial process to make the allocation more professional.
6. Following the meeting the CCRC will write to all referrers and inform them of the outcome of the allocation meeting in regard to their referral, including information on the service that may have taken their referral. (If no service accepts the referral, the referrer will be advised of any other possibilities the committee may have thought of that may be able to assist them.)
7. Prior to attending the next allocation meeting, each service provider is required to contact the carer in order to:
 - a) Confirm receipt of referral
 - b) Determine the appropriateness of the referral to the service in question
 - c) Ascertain any changes in circumstances
8. Should the referral be deemed inappropriate by either the carer or service provider it will be discussed at the meeting to determine whether another respite service may be appropriate and followed up within 2 weeks. If still not appropriate it will be brought back to the next allocation meeting.

9. At each allocation meeting the outcome of the previous quarters' meeting will be reviewed and any problems arising will be addressed.

THE RIAP WORKING PARTY:

The working party comprises of representatives from a variety of roles involved in the provision of respite within the Nepean region. They are committed service providers who are keen to explore the benefits or otherwise of using this model and who will welcome your feedback.

Members of the working party are available to meet with you and/or your organization to explain RIAP in more detail. Please contact the CCRC for more information about this.

THE ROLE OF A SERVICE PROVIDERS

The success of RIAP rests largely on the unified commitment of funded respite services and other persons involved in the provision of respite to carers of a person with a disability living in the Nepean. This may include respite services that provide overnight respite, day programs, flexible respite or leisure options. Social workers, case workers and other persons involved in making a referral on behalf on a carer are requested to utilize RIAP too. Please ensure that all staff are informed about RIAP and utilize the CCRC Intake process for longer-term as well as emergency respite requests.

ENQUIRIES

Please direct all enquiries to the Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre Nepean on 1800 059 059.

As always, feedback regarding the implementation and management of RIAP is welcome and viewed as an important part of ensuring the viability of this new referral process.