

### Welcome to the May Newsletter of the FCMH WS Program.

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### The Family and Carer Mental Health Program

The Family and Carer Mental Health Program is a program that works with Carers to identify their Carer support needs. The program does not provide crisis management, case management or counselling. The program aims to support Carers to gain skills and knowledge to support their Carer journey over a one-year period. Our Support Workers are not professional counsellors, psychologists, or case workers. The Family and Carer Mental Health Program offers Carers:

- Individual Carer Support including emotional support, information and advocacy
- Carer Support Groups
- Carer Education and Training which aims to build resilience and improve the ability to cope with the challenges of caring for someone with a mental illness.


### EDUCATION FOR MAY: Tending the Tides/De-escalation Strategies Workshop

10th May 10am-1pm

Online and Face to Face Workshop

Facilitated by Jess from Ink & Intuition

Location- Online or at Likemind 197 Prospect Highway,  
Seven Hills



This workshop will teach you about emotion regulation, why it helps and how to de-escalate high risk situations with your understanding of emotion regulation.

Face to face places are limited so register early.

**INK & INTUITION**  
Meet the facilitator  
**Jessica Matotek**  
Psychotherapist  
Mental Health Educator

### Carer Groups

Our carer support groups focus on carer strengths, providing information, skill building, and they offer opportunities to share experiences and connect with other carers.

- **Support Group for Carers of Young People on a Mental Health Journey**  
Online  
1st Monday of every month excluding public holidays  
6:00pm-7:30pm
- **Online Support Group for Carers of People who have suicidal Ideation and/or self-harm**– 2ND Wednesday of the month  
6.00pm- 7.00pm
- **Walk and Talk Carer Peer Social Group**  
See calendar for dates each month
- **Hybrid Carer Support Group at Cumberland Hospital**  
2nd Wednesday of every month  
4:00pm- 5:30pm
- **Face to Face Carer Conversations Support Group at Likemind Seven Hills Office**  
Last Tuesday of every month (Supper Included)  
With guest speakers/information topics alternating bi-monthly.  
6:00pm-7:30pm

We look forward to seeing you there!

### safeTALK

30th of May 9.30am – 1.30pm

Location- Mt Druitt Hub, 9 Ayres Grove, Mount Druitt, NSW,  
2770.

**safeTALK** is a four-hour training program that equips people to be more alert to someone thinking of suicide, and better able to connect them with further help to keep them safe.

Places are limited so register early.

Please contact the office or your Support Worker to register.

## Centrelink and Global Skills

Global Skills has a strong history of partnering with job seekers to identify, secure and maintain sustainable employment.

**Global Skills-** Individualised 45 min support with an Employment Consultant

**Centrelink-** Individualised 30 min support with Centrelink Community Engagement Officer

**Both these services require booking ahead of the dates, so please register with your support worker prior to your appointment.**

### Upcoming June Activities/Save the Dates:

Please register your interest: [lcrouse@uniting.org](mailto:lcrouse@uniting.org)

**Thursday 6th June 10:30am – 12:30pm Bunnings Craft Activity.**

Where: Likemind (197 Prospect Highway Seven Hills)

Refreshments will be provided.

**Saturday 22nd June 10:00am-1pm Acceptance in Action:**

**Empowering Change with Commitment Therapy Workshop**

Facilitated by Jess from Ink & Intuition

**Where:** Hybrid- Online and In person at Likemind (197 Prospect Highway Seven Hills)

Join us for an engaging psychoeducation workshop exploring the transformative principles of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) from a psychotherapist's lens.

In this interactive session, we'll delve into the art of developing acceptance of unwanted private experiences that lie beyond personal control. Through experiential exercises and group discussions, you'll learn practical strategies for embracing life's challenges with openness and compassion.

## Mental Health Conditions and Supportive Strategies Information Session

**23rd May 10:00am – 11:30am Information Session (Online)**

The expected outcomes will be improved understanding of:

- Mental health conditions/illnesses
- Signs/symptoms related to individual mental health conditions/illnesses
- Mental Health "Journey" and Recovery
- Potential therapies/ treatments related to individual mental health conditions/ illnesses
- Supportive strategies for family and carers during periods of crisis/ escalation
- Dignity of choice and Risks

### About the Facilitator:

- Alana Nolan is a Clinical Nurse Consultant, with a Masters Degree in Mental Health Nursing and over 10 years working in a variety of Mental Health settings including Adult, Older Persons and Child and Youth in both inpatient and community settings. Alana is passionate about providing a high standard of mental healthcare to individuals and their family/carers including psychoeducation, and supporting the community in better understanding the mental health journey.

## Health Focus for the month Eye Testing



Regular eye tests can detect and diagnose eye problems in the early stages, such as:

- [glaucoma](#)
- [cataracts](#)
- [macular degeneration](#)

The earlier these problems are diagnosed, the sooner you can get treated. This will improve your vision outcomes.

Eye tests can also help identify if you have trouble seeing at different distances. Your optometrist can give you glasses or contact lenses to improve your vision.

You should see a doctor or organise an eye test if you notice any:

- symptoms with your eyes
- changes to your vision

People aged 40 years and over should have an eye test every 2 – 3 years. However, you should have a test more regularly if you have risk factors such as:

- [diabetes](#)
- a family history of [eye disease](#)
- [high blood pressure](#)
- age over 65

(Information from: <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/eye-tests>)

# Uniting's Family and Carer Mental Health Program Carer Advisory Group (CAG)

Uniting's Family and Carer Mental Health (FCMH) Programs are seeking Expressions of Interest from Carers who may be interested in joining a newly formed FCMH Carer Advisory Group.

## What is the Carer Advisory Group (CAG)?

The Carer Advisory Group is for Carers to have a voice to improve services, which is led by the FCMH Carer Peer Workers. The FCMH Carer Peer Workers, together with a Carer representative from each of the four regions including Central Coast, Northern Sydney, Nepean Blue Mountains and Western Sydney, will make up the CAG.

## What are Carer Peer Workers?

Carer Peer Workers have a lived experience as a Carer for someone living with mental illness. They use this experience to support and inform other Carers on their own journey. Each FCMH Program has a Carer Peer Worker.

## Why we need you as a Carer Representative?

Carer representatives help Uniting FCMH staff understand the diversity of carer needs to provide better services. Carer representatives also contribute to a balance of views to help Uniting make better decisions and improve our policies. Ultimately, Carer participation results in better services for everyone.

Helping to improve the Uniting FCMH Program can be satisfying. You will have the opportunity to meet likeminded people and see how your efforts help influence change by knowing you are making a difference representing the wider Carer community.

CAG members' participation contributes to a range of outcomes for the Uniting FCMH program:

- More accessible and effective services
- Development of services reflective of Carer needs
- Evaluation of FCMH services from the Carer perspective

CAG members act in an advisory capacity. You are there to bring the Carer's voice to the planning table and act on behalf of the Carer community. CAG members are asked to commit to a monthly online meeting for 1 hour with small follow-up tasks suitable to your availability and skills and will be acknowledged for their time.

***If you would like more information on joining the FCMH Carer Advisory Group, please contact the Carer Peer Worker in your area for more information and an Expression of Interest Application Form.***

FCMH Central Coast- Mardi Bell- 0407 097 587 [mbell@uniting.org](mailto:mbell@uniting.org)

FCMH North Sydney- Sonja Pettersen- 0411 524 533 [spettersen@uniting.org](mailto:spettersen@uniting.org)

FCMH Western Sydney- Julie Douglas- 0436 299 596 [jdouglas@uniting.org](mailto:jdouglas@uniting.org)

FCMH Nepean Blue Mountains- Priseilla Seghabi- 0438 257 672 [pseghabi@uniting.org](mailto:pseghabi@uniting.org)

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS – MAY 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		<b>1st</b> 9am-12pm Global Skills (45 min Individual sessions)	<b>2nd</b>	<b>3rd</b>
<b>6th</b> 6.00pm-7.30pm Online Support Group for Carers of YP on a MH journey	<b>7th</b>	<b>8th</b> 4:00pm- 5:30pm Carer Support Group at Cumberland hospital  6.00pm-7.00pm Suicidal Ideation/self-harm Support Group Online	<b>9th</b>	<b>10th</b> 10.00am - 1.00pm Online or In-Person Workshop Tending the Tides De-Escalation Strategies
<b>13th</b>	<b>14th</b> 10am-1:30pm Centrelink (30 min individual sessions)	<b>15th</b> 10:30am-12:00pm Walk and Talk 9am-12pm  Global Skills (45 min Individual sessions)	<b>16th</b>	<b>17th</b>
<b>20th</b>	<b>21st</b>	<b>22nd</b>	<b>23rd</b> 10:30am- 12pm Online Wellness and Relaxation Group  23rd May 10:00am – 11:30am Information Session (Online) Topic: Overview of Mental Health Conditions/Strategies (facilitated by Alana Nolan Clinical Nurse Consultant)	<b>24th</b>
<p><b>To register for any event or for more information, please contact the office on (02) 8599 4880 or email <a href="mailto:fcmhinfows@uniting.org">fcmhinfows@uniting.org</a></b></p>				
<b>27th</b>	<b>28th</b> 10am-1:30pm Centrelink (30 min sessions)  6:00pm-7:30pm Face to face Carer Support Group	<b>29th</b>	<b>30th</b> 9:30am-1:30pm In Person SafeTALK Workshop (facilitated by Living Works) at the Mt Druitt Hub	<b>31st</b>

Contact details for the Family and Carer Mental Health Program  
Western Sydney team are:

Office phone: (02) 8599 4880  
Office email: [fcmhinfows@uniting.org](mailto:fcmhinfows@uniting.org)

Julie - Carer Peer Worker 0436 299 596  
Camille – Carer Support Worker 0428 068 517  
Patti – Carer Support Worker 0403 131 587  
Lisa – Team Leader 0438 221 178

## MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS HELP

MENTAL HEALTH LINE: 1800 011 511  
LIFELINE AUSTRALIA: 13 11 14  
1800 RESPECT (DV): 1800 737 732  
KIDS HELPLINE: 1800 551 800

EMERGENCY: 000 - If anyone you know is at immediate risk of harming themselves or others, call Triple Zero