

YourSide Launches New Care Finders Program

By Mia Hubber

YourSide, in partnership with Sydney North Health Network (North Sydney PHN), are delighted to announce the launch of the new care finders program in North Sydney. The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care's new program commenced in April 2023 and is serving North Sydney as part of a national network of care finders.

The care finder program focuses on providing support for older people in the community who are vulnerable and at risk of poor health outcomes, as the care finders work to improve the coordination of their care.

"The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety recommended the creation of a dedicated workforce to support people who require intensive support to navigate and access aged care, and that the aged care system needed an element for more vulnerable people that operated face to face and not just via call centre or online. The care finders program helps people access aged care services and

connect with other relevant supports in the community," said Your Side CEO, Danielle Ballantine.

The role of care finders within the program will be to connect people to relevant and quality aged care. Their support will help improve access to quality care for older individuals suffering from homelessness, mental illness, alcohol or drug dependence, care leavers, people leaving incarceration, and minority groups.

Care finders will offer support in many forms ranging from discussing the various options offered by local service providers, providing guidance with the paperwork and registration process for My Aged Care, or provide help navigating the assessment process at the individual's home as some people find the assessment process challenging. They will also help connect people to services like homelessness programs, mental health support, peer groups,

alcohol and other drug programs, transport services, or social groups.

Care finder team leader, Paul Tratt, stated, "We are finding a lot of people who are just lost in the system. Some have applied for funding, some have even been approved, but most are not accessing any of the supports available because they're just too overwhelmed. We are the essential intermediary. The client asks us direct questions, we go out to get the answers and come back with the answers, to explain in simple terms."

Danielle Ballantine said, "[Our care finders] are committed to working in a person-centred approach with all individuals to understand each person's unique journey."



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