

14 September 2011

## **Carers NSW says ask a carer R U OK?**

Thursday 15 September 2011 is R U OK? Day and Carers NSW is encouraging people to ask a carer they know R U OK?

R U OK? is a national day that aims to prevent suicide by encouraging Australians to connect with someone they care about and help stop little problems turning into big ones.

In NSW there are at least 850,000 carers who look after a family member or friend with a chronic illness, disability, mental illness, drug or alcohol dependency or who is frail. Carers often miss out on important social relationships and experiences, including those associated with work, recreation and leisure pursuits, which can leave them feeling isolated and too busy to look after their own health and wellbeing.

Deakin University research found that carers have significantly lower health and wellbeing than people who are not carers and they can also experience higher levels of depression.

“Many carers don’t want to say that they are not coping because they think they should be able to manage,” said Elena Katrakis CEO of Carers NSW.

“So if you know a carer – a family member, a work colleague or a neighbour, ask the question, R U OK?”

“You can also let them know that help is available from the Carer Line **1800 242 636** (free call except from mobiles) where they can speak to a Carers NSW carer support officer experienced in carer issues,” Ms Katrakis said.

National Carers Week 2011 is from Sunday 16 October to Saturday 22 October with many events around the state to celebrate. Carers Day Out will be held on Tuesday 18 October 08:00am-02:00pm in Martin Place, Sydney. This year’s theme is ‘Anyone, Anytime Can Be A Carer’. Information about Carers Week can be found at:

<http://carersaustralia.com.au/carersweek/>

### **Further information:**

For further information on carers and Carers NSW go to [www.carersnsw.asn.au](http://www.carersnsw.asn.au)

For further information on R U OK? Day go to [www.ruokday.com.au](http://www.ruokday.com.au)

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