



navigating the system

Use this space for your own notes and thoughts.

## 2.8 Having a good knowledge of the systems and services available

Navigating the health and social services systems can be challenging – there are many players involved and they can appear to operate in "silos" without talking to each other.

People with support roles have told us that they can't rely on the system to "do it for you", and that some knowledge of the maze of health and social services is essential.

In the diagram on the following page, we've identified some of the key groups of services that operate in Tasmania. We also provide a detailed **Directory of Contacts** at the back of this toolkit (on pages 69-73).



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The 'system' often changes and this can make it challenging to navigate. Everyone's experiences will be different so don't give up. Reach out to MHFFTas for support and help navigating the system.

Here's some suggestions for getting to know the health and social services systems:

- Health and social services may be operated by government – federal, state or local – non-government, or volunteer-based organisations. Your experiences may vary between each. Ask services directly and early on in your interactions about their policies for involving support persons.
- A GP is often the first point of contact for many people. GPs have access to the **HealthPathways** website, which provides detailed information to help GPs make the right decisions for you and the person you support. You can also access the community member part of the website and look under Mental Health and Addiction for more of mental health- related information.
- The **Carer Gateway** or 1800 422 737 provides free services and supports for people with a caring role and should have an intimate knowledge of the health and social services systems in Tasmania.
- Contact the **Tasmanian Government's Mental Health Services Helpline: 1800 332 388**. Services include mental health nurses, clinical psychologists, peer and carer workers, social workers, occupational therapists, and psychiatrists. You'll find a brochure about: **Mental Health Services for Adults** at: [health.tas.gov.au](http://health.tas.gov.au). Visit the **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service** webpage at [health.tas.gov.au](http://health.tas.gov.au). Go to the same weblink, and search for information about the **Older Persons Mental Health Service**. The **Department of Health - health.tas.gov.au** has a website about Tasmania's mental health system, which provides information about the services that the Department provides in inpatient settings, services provided by the community sector and services provided by private providers. There is information related to adults, children and adolescents, and older persons.
- If you're interacting with the **Tasmanian Government's Mental Health Services**, you can ask for a **Carer Peer Worker**. The role of the Carer Peer Worker is to support the families and friends of people who are treated by the **Adult Community Mental Health Services**. Read more at our MHFFTas website: [mhfamiliesfriendstas.org.au](http://mhfamiliesfriendstas.org.au). In the search function, type: **Talking Point: Carer Peer Workers**.



- **Legal Aid** for Tasmanians provides information related to the Mental Health Act 2013 (search for Enduring Guardian and Power of Attorney, and Mental Health Tribunal on their website - [legaid.tas.gov.au](http://legaid.tas.gov.au). The organisation also provides useful referral contact information for other services.
- It's a good idea to join a peer support group to share your knowledge and access others' knowledge of Tasmanian services and systems. You can find out more at our website - [mhfamiliesfriendstas.org.au](http://mhfamiliesfriendstas.org.au), once there search: Safe Spaces Peer Support Program.
- When you find a helpful person anywhere in the system, nurture that relationship and ask them to help guide you and make connections elsewhere in the system.
- If you're experiencing ongoing difficulty, consider making a complaint, providing feedback or contact a local politician – they are there to serve the community. Search: **Providing Feedback** at - [health.tas.gov.au](http://health.tas.gov.au).



## LOOK FOR SERVICES THAT OFFER MENTAL HEALTH CARER INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

Mental Health Carers Australia have developed six **Partnership Standards** designed to improve outcomes for people who interact with mental health services by combining the knowledge and skills of staff with the knowledge and lived experience of family and friends in a partnership approach to service delivery across all settings.

Mental Health Families and Friends encourages services to self-assess against the Partnership Standards and access the **A Practical Guide for Working with Carers of People with Mental Illness**.

Search: **A-Practical-Guide-for-working-with-people-with-a-mental-illness-February-2016.pdf**

You can ask the services you interact with if they are aware of this Guide - [mentalhealthcarersaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/A-Practical-Guide-for-working-with-people-with-a-mental-illness-February-2016.pdf](http://mentalhealthcarersaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/A-Practical-Guide-for-working-with-people-with-a-mental-illness-February-2016.pdf) and suggest they might like to have a look at it.