

The Cancer Patient and Carer Home Visit Scheme aims to assist those people in greatest need affected by a cancer diagnosis. The scheme creates a link of support, company and conversation for community members after a cancer diagnosis, promoting a greater sense of wellbeing.



We Understand...

...that people living with cancer and their carers need more support. Often people do not want to burden others and can feel isolated from their network of support. Family or carers may not be able to meet these needs. The family members or carer themselves may also be feeling overwhelmed and alone.

The scheme provides friendship and companionship by linking recipients with volunteer visitors and providing information on other available support services and resources. Volunteers are warm, friendly, compassionate people willing to offer an understanding ear without offering medical advice or counsel.

If you feel you would like the company of a Volunteer Visitor...

...we welcome any person, family member or carer affected by a cancer diagnosis whose quality of life could be improved by the companionship of a regular community visitor.

Individuals can self-identify that they would benefit, or can be referred with their permission by a family member, friend, doctor, social worker or any other health professional.

There are no costs involved in becoming a recipient. You do need to be a resident of the Ballina Shire. The scheme provides a WHS home assessment prior to visits. Confidentiality is assured.

***To be allocated a volunteer or find out more about the scheme contact:
FSG Ballina / Ph: 02 6618 4970***

Background:

A major finding of a needs study conducted with local cancer patients by the Ballina Cancer Network Committee highlighted the lack of support available to them. People commented on the loneliness they felt after being given a cancer diagnosis and many were unwilling to share their feelings with their friends and family as they didn't wish to burden them. It is widely accepted that social and emotional wellbeing is an integral part of dealing with cancer treatment and recovery.

There is an identified gap around emotional and psychological support for local people facing the trauma of a cancer diagnosis. Cancer diagnoses have devastating social and psychological effects on the patients, their families, friends and carers as well as the strain associated with issues such as loss of income and an uncertain future.

With the opening of the new Cancer Oncology Unit at the Lismore Base Hospital in 2014, medical services to local cancer patients have increased dramatically. This unit, coupled with the major developments in cancer treatments over recent years, has seen more and more residents being treated locally and surviving their cancer far longer than previously.



How the scheme operates:

Not for Profit organisations FSG and Cancer Council NSW have come together in recognition of support needed locally. The scheme is led by FSG with support from Cancer Council NSW.

What is provided by a Volunteer Visitor:

Volunteering as a visitor assists by:

- providing socialisation, friendship, conversation, listening and emotional support.
- providing a short break for carers and or family in their home.
- Identify if further support is required and referring to support networks that may help.
- Inform of other services available
- Listening and just “being there”

Recipients come from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds. Volunteer visitors are also drawn from all backgrounds and are fully trained, screened and supported by FSG Australia and Cancer Council NSW. All volunteers need to be over the age of 18.