



# Essentials of Care

## Consumer Information

### What is Essentials of Care?

Essentials of Care is a program to improve all people's experience of health care, whether in hospital or in the home or any other healthcare environment.

The program aims to do this by:

- Deliberately listening and responding to all consumers views, whether a patient, resident, carer, relative or staff member about what matters most to them about their healthcare;
- Assessing the quality of the essential care being delivered from all perspectives;
- Identifying where improvements can be made;
- Developing and activating localised plans to improve that care;
- Openly encouraging and enabling consumers and health professionals to work together, and
- Celebrating good, effective care that centres on people and their individual needs (called person-centred care).

### What is meant by essential care?

Essential care is a term that health professionals use to help articulate the aspects of care that are fundamental to all consumers health and wellbeing, regardless of what part of the health care system they are accessing, from general hospital, mental health, maternity, paediatric or in the community. This includes such things as personal care, safety, how information is shared and how you can be more involved in decision making.

### How will it affect me?

The program starts with the health professionals agreeing on their values as a team that guide the way they care for you the consumer.

The next step is to assess all aspects of care given. This is done by using 3 different processes:

1. Auditing of the paperwork that is completed by health professionals
2. Asking a number of consumers to tell their stories of their personal experiences of the service and care they have received
3. Observing the care that is being delivered, this may include, an extra staff member coming to your home to observe the care being given by health professionals in the community or have staff located at different points within a clinical area at various times observing their colleagues at work.

If you have any concerns about being observed, please speak to a member of staff or the manager of the service.



## What are the benefits that I should see?

By working together consumers and health professionals can understand the essential aspects of care which will contribute to health care being a more satisfying experience for all.

The approach used is called person-centred care and means that everyone's needs, values and views are important.

Consumers and Staff will benefit from the program through:

- Being able to give and receive better care;
- Better outcomes for consumers, including quicker recovery time, less risks such as infections or falls, better pain management and getting home sooner;
- Greater satisfaction with your health care experience.

If you would like to know more or talk to someone about the Essentials of Care program please ask a member of staff.

**For more information about the Essentials of Care program and contact details for your local EOC Leaders and Coordinators.**

**Please go to the NSW Health Nursing and Midwifery Office website:**

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing/>



## What say do I have?

The Essentials of Care program recognises that consumers should be active participants in their healthcare and wellbeing. That is why involving consumers as well as staff is a vital part of the program, so that your feelings about your care can be heard.

When sharing your experiences of the service you have been involved with, the person who asks you to tell your story will not be a member of the team looking after you, but someone external. They will ask you for your consent to share your story with the team, so we ask you to be open and honest so that your experience can be used to help others.

If observations are taking place in the clinical area you are in or are going to be taking place in your home, you will be informed, and the observer will make themselves known to you. The observer is there to watch and listen, and will not actively take part in your care at that time, so it's best if you don't interrupt or ask them about your care unless it is necessary for you to do so.