



Code of Family Rights

For the family/whanau of a person who has, or may be developing a major mental illness

People with serious mental illness are not ill in isolation - their families/whanau are almost always involved. When a family member affected by mental illness chooses to involve their family/whanau as partners in care, there are improved opportunities for recovery. It is clear that if families are educated and informed about mental illness, they are better able to give support. The aim of Supporting Families in Mental Illness NZ is for families to access the best possible care and outcomes when affected by a major mental illness.

The family/whanau has the right to:

- A family-centred approach to treatment and support.
- Be treated with understanding and respect.
- Be taken seriously when expressing concerns about changes in a family member's behaviour.
- Information about a family member's illness, the diagnosis, treatment and possible side effects of treatment.
- Information about the range of relevant services and supports available in the community.
- Provide relevant information about a family member's history, in confidence.
- Inclusion in care planning, implementation and review.
- Know the names and contact phone numbers of other members of the caregiving team.
- Rapid response in all situations, but especially in an emergency.
- Be consulted about a family member's discharge plan.
- Help for problems created or exacerbated by caring for a family member with a mental illness.
- Time out when required to prevent 'burnout' or to cope with stress.
- Seek other opinions regarding the diagnosis and treatment of a family member.
- Culturally appropriate treatment options which are inclusive of the family.
- Mechanisms of complaint and redress.
- A mental health service that recognizes the need for families to participate in shaping the service, and invites families to take part in service planning, implementation and evaluation.

To provide the best possible education, advocacy and support for family/ whānau of people experiencing a major mental illness.

