



*For immediate use*

## **Official opening of carer respite service Up to 3 days and 2 nights respite break for carers of frail aged people and people with dementia**

The Woonona Cottage respite service was formally opened by Hope Healthcare Chief Executive Officer Mark Newton on Thursday 9 November.

Guest speaker at the opening, Barbara Lewis, Manager of the Northern Sydney Carer Support Service, NSCCAHS, said that the carer of someone with dementia or someone who is older and frail can be demanding both mentally, and physically, which can take a toll on a carer's general wellbeing. "A short respite break can mean carers have a chance to participate in an activity they enjoy, have some time off and come back to providing care, refreshed and with batteries recharged. The flexibility provided by Woonona Cottage means carers have access to respite for those shorter breaks."

The a six-bedroom Woonona Cottage provides a safe secure home-like environment for up to two nights for people with dementia and for frail aged people and has been operating since late August.

Guest activities include card and board games and reminiscence, outings, gardening, arts and crafts, short walks, movies and music.

This service is for carers across northern Sydney, from Sydney Harbour to the Hawkesbury River. Fees charged are under \$30 a night and these are waived if this is beyond the means of the carer.

Bookings are made by telephoning Northern Sydney Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre on 1800 059 059. Enquirers may speak with the House Manager at Woonona Cottage direct, on 9488 2288.

Woonona Cottage is funded by the Department of Health and Ageing as part of the National Respite for Carers Program.

*Sydney 9 November 2006*

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