



26 August 2004

## **Karitane Service Profile**

Karitane is an affiliated hospital in South Western Sydney Area Health Service (SWSAHS) that provides crucial support, care and information to approximately 30,000 families each year with children from birth to five years old.

As a statewide tertiary referral service and centre for best practice in Child & Family Health Karitane aims: *To achieve a recognised leadership position and set the standards for best practice in the provision of child and family services in NSW, and especially SWSAHS.*

The services that operate from Karitane include:

**Residential Family Care Unit** – the 22-bed statewide tertiary service at Carramar admits about 550 families each year. Using a self-care model the centre admits families with children aged 0-5 experiencing parenting difficulties for 5-7 days to learn skills to enable them to parent effectively.

**Karitane Careline** – a statewide 24-hour telephone information service provides vital support and advice to more than 22,000 callers each year on a range of issues. The most frequent enquiries relate to problems with feeding, sleeping and settling. About 40 per cent of calls to the Karitane Careline are for ‘unsettled babies’ and ‘night waking’.

Parents can contact the Careline on (02) 9794 1852 (Sydney metropolitan area) or 1800 677 961 if they live outside of Sydney.

**Family Care Cottages** – Cottages at Liverpool and Randwick provided support and counselling to families on more than 2,800 occasions last year in either a group setting or individual consultations, particularly for breastfeeding issues. ‘Sleep and Settle’ education programs are held weekly.

**Jade House** – A specialist day stay unit in Fairfield provides support and counselling to more than 2,100 families each year who reside in south-western Sydney for perinatal mood and related disorders including anxiety and depression. Karitane’s unique programs address a woman’s relationships and any attachment problems for the client and her family, with a strong focus on mother and baby.

**Volunteer Home Visiting Program** – The volunteer based program funded by the NSW Department of Community Services provides long-term support to around 300 families each year. Karitane has 75 active volunteers who provide care on a one-to-one basis in a client's home or through group sessions.

**Education Unit** – The education department at Karitane is committed to providing high quality educational activities and support to health professionals and parents. Working in partnership with the University of Western Sydney Karitane offers a Graduate Diploma in Nursing (Child and Family – Karitane). It also offers a Certificate IV in Parentcraft Nursing for Enrolled Nurses.

In addition to a variety of education groups for parents and training for volunteers, Karitane has conducted the first training program for South Western Sydney Area Health Services Bilingual Early Parenting Educators who will provide education and support to families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds through a sustained visiting program.

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