



### **Who is Heart Support Australia?**

Heart Support Australia is the peak national body providing support and advocacy for Australians affected by heart disease. We are a consumer body providing support, encouragement, education and advocacy for heart disease patients and their families.

Established in 1989, our mission is to facilitate the transition from hospital to home and provide ongoing support for heart disease patients in Australia. Our goal is to stop cardiac events and improve the lives of those living with heart disease in Australia. We coordinate peer support groups and hospital patient visitors across the country to provide support to those in hospital and at home with heart disease.

### **What are Hospital Patient Visitors?**

Hospital Patient Visitors are volunteers who have been carefully selected based on their personality, demeanour, and commitment to supporting others during a traumatic life event.

Our volunteers are people who have heart disease and have firsthand experiences of dealing with the physical and mental trauma of a cardiac event or surgery.

The Hospital Patient Visitors are called to various hospitals around the country to provide bedside support to patients and their carers going through their hospital journey, in order to assist them during a difficult time. All of Heart Support Australia's Hospital Patient Visitors have completed our training course conducted by a qualified instructor and are required to maintain regular police checks.

### **Why are Hospital Patient Visitors so important?**

The work of a Patient Visitor is listening to the client. Verbalising experiences and telling 'their' story is something that people need to do as a part of the healing process. The advantage of the Hospital Patient Visitor is that it offers something many health professionals are not able to give and that is an unlimited amount of time to listen to the patient, and someone that has also experienced what the patient has experienced and can relate to the patient during their time of need.



**Hospital Patient Visitors**

Support from our Hospital Patient Visitors can happen at any time whilst the patient is in hospital, where once a patient is discharged from a hospital and wishes to continue on with support, then they are encouraged to attend one of our peer support groups in their local area.



### How do you become a Hospital Patient Visitor?

If you are interested in becoming a Hospital Patient Visitor please contact us at Heart Support Australia to discuss your eligibility and look at enrolling you in our next training course which can be done in person or online.

If there is no Peer Support Group in your area, this doesn't matter, as we can still have Hospital Patient Visitors attend local hospitals across the country to provide that bedside support.

Training is free to all those registered in the course which is conducted by our National Patient Visitor Instructor on a regular basis. Our National Instructor will also be available for ongoing support for all of our volunteers for any questions or issues that arise across our group.

Upon completion of the course all Patient Visitor Volunteers will be registered with Heart Support Australia and assigned a hospital of their choice to attend as a Patient Visitor.

### Contact Us

To get more information about our Peer Support Group locations or to become a volunteer with us please contact us:

Heart Support Australia  
Level 3, 50 Launceston Street  
Phillip ACT 2606  
Ph: 02 6253 0097  
email: [office@heartnet.org.au](mailto:office@heartnet.org.au)  
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*Heart Support Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters, and community. We pay our respect to them and their cultures, and Elders past, present and future.*