

## Guideline for Referrers

### Eligibility for referral to Mum for Mum

Our organisation supports mothers either in the third trimester of pregnancy or the first year of their baby's life. Most of those eligible for our program are identified as being vulnerable due to isolation, a history of anxiety and depression, or physical health challenges.

We are not case workers and not equipped to support mothers who are:

- Substance abusing
- Currently experiencing domestic violence which may put the volunteer at risk, or be outside their ability to offer emotional support
- Suffering from mental illness other than depression or anxiety
- Experiencing extremely challenging circumstances, unless they are concurrently well-supported by professionals and/or agencies

Most of our volunteers live in the Eastern Suburbs and North Shore of Sydney. We can only assist mothers who live within reasonable driving distance from available volunteers. This is assessed on a case-by-case basis. Areas supported may include the Eastern Suburbs, Inner West, North Shore, and Northern Beaches.

### About Mum for Mum

Our goal is to facilitate a secure and trusting relationship between the volunteer and the recipient mother which she can then emulate with her child. We aim to alleviate isolation, anxiety, and depression and to build the confidence of the recipient mother so that she can best respond to her child's needs and is able to "delight" in her child, creating the foundations for secure attachment.

### What we do

Volunteers visit mothers once a week during the first year of their baby's life to provide emotional support. The role of the volunteer is to listen, witness, counsel and reassure the recipient mother, be a companion, confidant, and role model, and to provide a sounding-board for the mother. Our role is NOT to give advice or take the place of a professional.

### New Mothers' Terms of Participation

The recipient mother is asked to sign Terms of Participation. Please email [contact@mumformum.org.au](mailto:contact@mumformum.org.au) if you would like us to send you a copy.

### Volunteer Training and Supervision

Volunteers attend ten hours of initial training and are expected to attend ongoing training and supervision on a fortnightly basis with regular workshops on relevant topics including:

- The role of the volunteer
- Active listening skills and effective communication
- Coping mechanisms and problem-solving
- Setting boundaries
- Recognising postnatal depression and anxiety
- Domestic violence and mandatory reporting
- Workshops on Circle of Security, cross-cultural communication, suicide prevention, bereavement and loss and other areas of relevance.

### Volunteer checks and vaccination

All volunteers undergo Police and Working with Children checks. Most are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and whooping cough. All our volunteers are mothers themselves, and a large number are tertiary educated.