



Helping hand: Helen Glezos, of Illawong, is a full-time carer to her mother, Nicki Pappas, who suffers from Alzheimer's disease. Picture: Chris Lane

The unsung heroes of our community save taxpayers \$30 billion a year

REWARDS OF A CARING LIFE

HELEN Glezos knows only too well the demands of being a carer. Mrs Glezos, 55, of Illawong, has cared for her mother, Nicki Pappas, for 14 years.

Mrs Pappas, now 83, moved in with Mrs Glezos, her husband, Peter, and daughter, Nicole, in 1988, soon after her husband died.

When she began suffering dementia in her early 70s, her only daughter took on the role of her carer.

Since being diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, her

health has deteriorated to the point where she has the mental capacity of a child aged three to five and is totally reliant on her daughter.

As well as caring for her mother, Mrs Glezos drives to her aunt and uncle's Drummoynes home two to three times a week to care for them.

She said it was impossible to calculate how many hours a day she devoted to her mother's care. "I bathe her, I dress her, I give her medication, I make sure she is eating" she said. "Over the past four years it has really changed the dynamics of our family life."

Mrs Glezos said caring for someone with "diminished mental facilities" had its own

challenges. "There is no day that is the same," she said.

"It's rewarding, it's depressing, it's frustrating you go through 10,000 emotions guilt, hate, anger, pity."

She counts herself lucky that her mother is what she calls "delightfully demented". "She is not aggressive or a wanderer or incontinent," she said. Mrs Pappas can be left alone only for very short periods and the family has not been on a holiday in years.

She has been told that as her mother's condition deteriorates she will need to go into a nursing home but is determined to keep her at home as long as possible.

Mrs Glezos attends a monthly support group for Greek carers run by Sutherland Shire Carer Support Service. The service is part of Sutherland Shire Carers Working Party, which organised a range of events to mark Carer's Week, from October 18 to 24, including a lunch and dinner at Loftus TAFE, a picnic at Gunnamatta Pavilion, Cronulla, and a multicultural Carers Week luncheon. Other organisations, including Centrelink, also held events.

Working party member Tracy Sami said the role of carers in the community was often overlooked. She said the estimated cost of replacing unpaid carers with paid workers was \$30 billion a year.

article from The Leader

Greek stars of Peruvian television

Journalist Monica Delta presents one of Peru's most-watched current affairs shows, "A primera hora" every morning on the "Frecuencia Latina" channel, while actress Katia Kontos (foto) is a leading lady in many television series, movies, the theatre and, more recently, the presenter of a morning show, entitled "Hola a todos" on the ATV channel. Delta - whose grandfather, Socrates Delta, came from Argos - is still trying to find her relatives in Greece, but without any luck. On the other hand, Kontos retains contacts with her family and especially with her aunt, who lives in Athens and has the same name.



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