Manage your bills for free

Did you know Centrelink has a FREE service to help you manage your bills?

This service is Centrepay. With Centrepay, you can choose to have small amounts of money deducted from your Centrelink payments each fortnight to pay your bills. Centrepay is a great way to manage your regular household expenses, such as:

✍ rent
✍ telephone
✍ electricity, gas and water
✍ medical services
✍ child care fees
✍ school fees, and many other bills.

With Centrepay, it is easy to ensure your bills are paid on time. You can decide which bills are paid through Centrepay, and how much money is deducted each fortnight. You can also start, stop or change your Centrepay deductions at any time.

To begin using Centrepay, you can register online at www.centrelink.gov.au over the phone by calling the Centrelink Multilingual Call centre on 13 1202* or by filling in a Centrepay Deductions Form at a Centrelink office, Centrelink Agent or a service provider registered with Centrepay.

For more information about Centrepay, please visit Centrelink's website at www.centrelink.gov.au or to speak to someone in [language], call 13 1202*.

Call charges may vary depending on the telephone service provider. Calls from public telephones and mobile phones may be charged at a higher rate.

Extra support for older Australians after hospital stays

More than 30,000 older Australians each year will receive customised care and support to return to everyday life after a spell in hospital, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing Mark Butler announced today. The Gillard Government is expanding the Transition Care Program by 651 places, bringing the total number of Transition Care places to 4,000. "We are delivering on our election commitment to provide 4,000 places for older Australians. When all 4,000 places are fully operational, more than 30,000 people each year will benefit from the program," Mr Butler said.

"The Transition Care Program provides flexible and customised care and support to older people leaving hospital to return home rather than going to a nursing home prematurely.

"Under the program, older Australians can receive up to 12 weeks of care with a possible extension of 6 weeks, either in their own home or in a residential setting, following discharge from hospital.

"They can access a package of services that includes personal care, nursing care and low intensity therapy such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy and social work.

"The program helps older people improve their independence and functioning while giving them, their families and carers time to think about long term care arrangements, such as entering a community aged care program or residential aged care." Mr Butler said today's release of the report Older people leaving hospital: A statistical overview of the Transition Care Program in 2008-09, by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare confirmed the success of the Transition Care Program.

"The AIHW data shows that functioning improved for nearly three quarters of people completing the Transition Care Program.

"The results for 2009-10 are even better. Of the more than 14,800 people who received transition care, more than 80 per cent have either improved or maintained their functional capacity and more than 50 per cent have been able to return to the community either in community aged care or totally independently."

The expansion of the Transition Care Program is part of Gillard Government's commitment to respond to the needs of Australia's ageing population. "Since being elected in 2007 the Government has committed more than $293 million to the Transition Care Program as part of a $40 billion investment in aged and community care," Mr Butler said. "We recognise Australia is an ageing society and we are putting plans in place now rather than waiting for the problem to overwhelm us. "No government in Australian history has spent more on aged care and community care."

POLICE REPORT

Fatal motorcycle crash – Urbenville

Police will prepare a report for the Coroner following the death of a motorcycle rider in the state's north on Sunday.

The 53-year-old man from Tugun was riding his motorcycle with four others in the Smiths Plantation, near Urbenville, about 1.45pm yesterday when he was found on the ground. Emergency services were called to the scene but the man could not be revived. Investigations by police indicate the rider might have lost control after hitting a rise on the dirt track. Inquiries are continuing.

Teen charged after alleged robbery – Bondi Junction

A teenager has been charged following an attempted robbery at Bondi Junction, in Sydney's east, on Sunday night.

About 8pm on Sunday (5 June), a 27-year-old man was walking through a car park on Grafton Street, Bondi Junction, when he was approached from behind and assaulted. Investigators have been told the victim was surrounded by three male youths who demanded property. The victim called for help and all three youths ran from the area. A short time later, police from Eastern Suburbs Local Area Command were patrolling nearby Adelaide Street, when they spotted three youths.

Police attempted to speak to the youths; however, they ran away. Following a short foot chase, police arrested a 16-year-old male. He was taken to Waverley Police Station where he was later charged with assault with intent to rob. He will appear at Bidura Children's Court on 11 July.

Investigations into the incident are continuing and police wish to speak to two youths who they believe can assist with their inquiries. The first is described as being aged in his mid to late teens, Caucasian in appearance and 170cm tall with a slim build. He was wearing a dark-coloured collared shirt, dark running shorts and a pair of sneakers. The second male is also described as being aged in his mid to late teens, Caucasian in appearance and 170cm tall with a slim build. At the time of the incident he is described as wearing a grey hooded jumper, tracksuit pants and sneakers. Anyone who may be able to offer information in relation to the incident is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Liverpool unit fire

Police are investigating the cause of a unit fire at Liverpool, in Sydney's southwest, yesterday morning.

About 4.40am yesterday, Fire and Rescue NSW personnel responded to reports of a fire at a block of flats on Memorial Avenue. Fire fighters cut steel window bars to gain access to the burning unit.

They rescued a 31-year-old man, his 27-year-old wife and their two-year-old son, who were treated at the scene by NSW Ambulance Paramedics before being taken to Liverpool Hospital. The man and woman were then transferred to Concord Hospital's Burns Unit for specialist treatment. The toddler has since been taken to The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

One of six residents evacuated from a neighbouring flat was also hospitalised suffering smoke inhalation. He has since been released. A crime scene has been secured at the unit block and is being examined by forensics officers, as investigations into the cause of the blaze continue.

Anyone with information that might assist local detectives with their inquiries is urged to contact Liverpool Police Station via Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Woman charged with alleged high range drink driving

A female motorist has allegedly returned a breath test reading six times over the legal limit. Just after 12am today (Sunday 5 June 2011), police were called to Christie Road, Tarro, after reports that a female driver had collided with a parked car.

A 45-year-old woman was breath tested at the scene and allegedly returned a positive result. She was arrested and taken to Maitland Police Station where she allegedly returned a positive breath analysis of 0.326, which is six times the legal limit of 0.05. The woman's licence was immediately suspended and she was charged with high-range drink driving. The woman will appear at Maitland Local Court on 4 July 2011.

Man wanted over indecent assault – Wahroonga

Police are appealing for public assistance after a woman was indecently assaulted on Sunday. About 6.20pm (Sunday 5 June 2011), a 17-year-old woman was walking past a car park on Coonanbarra Road, Wahroonga, when a man approached her from behind. The man allegedly grabbed the woman around the stomach, before indecently assaulting her. The woman managed to break free and ran from the area, alerting police. Police now wish to speak to a man they believe may be able to assist with their inquiries into the incident.

He is described as Caucasian in appearance and 183 cm tall. At the time he was wearing dark coloured clothing and white shoes. Police are continuing with their investigations into the incident and are urging anyone with information to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

Police investigate alleged street racing – Forbes

Police from the Lachlan Local Area Command are investigating suspected street racing in Forbes last week.

Shortly before 11pm Friday (3 June), police observed three vehicles allegedly travelling at high speed east on Bedgerebong Road. The vehicles, all Holden Commodores, then allegedly slowed for an upcoming roundabout. Police will allege one vehicle crossed to the wrong side of the road and hit the gutter, finally coming to a stop a short distance away. The second vehicle didn't stop and was last seen travelling east. The third car was flagged down and stopped by police.

A subsequent search of the cars by police allegedly found a quantity of cannabis.

Two males, a 17-year-old and a 21-year-old, were taken by police to Forbes Hospital for urine tests. As a result, the two vehicles stopped were confiscated by police.

Police inquiries into the incident are continuing.

ANY PERSON WHO CAN ASSIST SHOULD CONTACT CRIME STOPPERS ON 1800 333 000