

**Family, friends,
carers and support
persons**



Community of Care



The Melbourne Clinic
by Healthscope



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Welcome

The Melbourne Clinic welcomes you as a visitor to the hospital and thanks you for your interest in your relative or friend's wellbeing while they are with us.

At The Melbourne Clinic we deliver Patient Centered Care; care that is respectful of, and responsive to the preferences, needs and values of our patients. Our programs and care are based on the recovery model.

The Melbourne Clinic embodies an inclusive service. We are dedicated to providing services that are culturally sensitive and aware. We understand and are accepting of diversity in identity.

Regardless of the reasons behind the admission, we realise families, friends, carers and support persons may have questions they would like answered. This booklet aims to go some way towards providing those answers.

This may be your family member or friend's first-ever admission to hospital, or it might be their first admission to our facility. Whichever the case, The Melbourne Clinic's care team will aim to provide the best medical, social and psychological support during their stay, in order for them to take an active role in their own recovery.



Consumer and Carer Consultants

Advocacy, Peer Support and Feedback

Consumer Consultants are a bridge between consumers and The Melbourne Clinic. They support patients to be actively engaged in their journey towards wellness and contribute to The Melbourne Clinic's service planning and delivery.

The Consumer Consultants will provide advice to the hospital about partnership with consumers and carers and help us to maintain and improve our patient-centred approach.

Consumer and Carer Consultants have experience in mental health hospital services, as a consumer; either as a patient or carer/support person.

Consumer and Carer Consultants also provide support to consumers, patients, carers and support persons, they can answer your questions and assist you to negotiate and understand the hospital processes. They are independent of the hospital and you can confidentially discuss any aspects of care provided by The Melbourne Clinic.

If you have questions about your loved one's care, or concerns with how they are managing, please speak with the contact nurse first.

Should a more serious concern arise, please ask to speak to either the Nurse Unit Manager or the After Hours Manager.

If you would prefer to speak to someone who is independent of the hospital's staff, please speak with our reception or nursing staff who will coordinate an appointment for you with the Consumer or Carer Consultant.

Importance of families, friends, carers and support persons

Our team acknowledges that families, friends, carers and/or support persons play a vital role, not only in the immediate and day-to-day support of their loved ones but also in their longer-term wellbeing once they are discharged. Therefore, our shared goal is to ensure that an easily accessed support network is firmly in place prior to discharge to help your loved one remain healthy.

We acknowledge that, from a family and friends viewpoint, the issues around mental health can be complex, dynamic and sometimes demanding. While our patients are encouraged to drive their own recovery planning, The Melbourne Clinic team also encourages families, friends, carers and support persons to support their ongoing efforts in whatever constructive ways they can, while ensuring their own wellbeing.

To do this successfully, families, friends, carers and support persons may need to learn more about mental illnesses, discover positive ways to support their loved ones and, on occasion, accept professional advice about healthy ways to respond to issues and difficulties.

Importantly – as well as providing suggested sources of mental health information and support later in this booklet – we encourage families to embrace self-care as well.

Patient Centred Care

At The Melbourne Clinic we use a patient centred care approach to recovery. What that means is that our multidisciplinary team – psychiatrists, general practitioners, nurses, psychologists, occupational therapists, social workers and other allied health professionals – will work closely with patients, from day one, focusing on:

- Addressing their immediate issues
- Shaping their personalised care plan
- Educating them further about their specific diagnosis
- Establishing shared goal-setting for the short, medium and longer-term
- Planning for their discharge
- Putting strategies in place for community support and relapse prevention
- Working towards their recovery.

This holistic approach has been proven to deliver a higher level of personalised treatment and support as well as better long-term outcomes.

Our patients are admitted under the care of a consultant psychiatrist or physician accredited to The Melbourne Clinic. During the admission, patients are offered a range of in-patient group programs focusing on how to manage their illness, developing adaptive coping skills, establishing and working towards their recovery goals.

The admitting doctor will work directly with them to ensure they attend an appropriate selection of therapeutic programs throughout their stay. In these programs, in-patients may also work further on their recovery and discharge plans.

The admitting doctor may recommend ongoing day program attendance or outreach services after discharge, when appropriate.

The care plan and bedside handover

Upon admission, or as soon as they are able, all patients will develop and sign, with the support of their nurse, an individualised care plan. With the consent of the patient, families, carers or support persons are also able to participate in care planning and are invited to sign the care plan, recognising their contribution to recovery.

At the end of each morning's nursing shift, a clinical handover takes place for each patient in the presence of that person. This not only allows in-patients to know who their nurse will be for the coming shift, but also to raise care-related issues or questions. With the consent of the patient, you may also participate in this handover.

While your loved one is an in-patient at The Melbourne Clinic, their care team will also work with them to identify appropriate social and community support networks for when they go home.

Day Program and Outreach Program

Please see our brochures for further information around specific programs located on our website and at the Consumer Hub on Level 1.

The focus of these programs are supporting patients to continue working on their recovery, developing and utilising coping strategies to support ongoing mental health and wellbeing, while minimising the disruptions to life by reducing the length and frequency of hospital stays.

When this is all new

The caring/supporting role can come about in many ways. You may have become a carer/support person of someone who has just received a mental health diagnosis. You may have only had prior experience caring for someone with a physical condition. On the other hand, you may have been a carer/support for someone with a mental health condition for a while.

Discovering more about mental health conditions, their treatment and how to best respond as a carer/support person are important steps to help you lessen the stress of your role and to build confidence in the care and support you'll give. The Melbourne Clinic recognises the potential value of carers/support persons to the ongoing wellbeing and welfare of its patients.

Family and carers information sessions

The Melbourne Clinic offers regular Family, Friend's and Carers information sessions.

These sessions gives carers, relatives and friends the chance to:

- Ask questions, air concerns, share experiences
- Learn more about mental illness as well as ways to respond to your family member or friend, according to the level of distress in the moment
- Make the most of available social supports
- Begin post-hospital preparations ahead of discharge
- Gain confidence in supporting someone with mental health struggles.

In addition to Family and Carer Evenings, we also offer support sessions through Eating Disorders Victoria.

These sessions are advertised throughout The Melbourne Clinic, on our Facebook page and website, or please speak with one of our staff who will help you.

Privacy matters

Upon admission, patients will be asked to nominate the individuals with whom the hospital may discuss aspects of their care. It is important for a patient's family, carer, friends/supports or other visitors to understand that if an individual has not been specifically nominated by the patient then the hospital cannot disclose any details in relation to that person. This is a legal requirement under national privacy legislation.

Of course, we would encourage you, at any time, to contact nursing staff or any other member of the multidisciplinary team to share information about the person for whom you are providing support. This can be done in full or partial confidence and can often help the care team make a more comprehensive assessment of the person's mental health needs.

In some instances, family consultation in order to educate can also be helpful. If this applies to your circumstances, your relative or friend may request a family consultation with the treating doctor or another team member during their stay.



Applying structure to the day

'Disorder' is a word that comes up quite a bit around mental illness. The aim of our care team is to help our patients restore some order, structure and routines that will help them reduce the level of disruption in their lives. For this reason, their days in hospital will typically develop a rhythm to them: times when they will attend therapeutic programs, times when they will see their psychiatrist or doctor, times when they will dine, times when they will have some quiet time to work on their recovery, times they will spend outdoors or chatting to other in-patients.

To help keep that rhythm settled, the hospital has set visiting hours. These allow those important activities to go on with minimal disruption.

Generally, visiting times are:

- Mondays to Fridays from 12.00pm to 1.30pm and 3.30pm to 8.00pm
- Weekends and public holidays 12.00pm to 8.00pm.

Specialist Programs, such as Addictive Behaviours, Eating Disorders Program, and Intensive Care Unit have visiting hours designed to meet patient and program needs. Please check with nursing or reception staff to clarify these.

You or your family may like to share an evening meal with your loved one in our dining room. If so, please speak to reception to arrange this for a nominal fee.

Providing a safe environment

On occasions, some steps that are taken for patient and staff safety may initially seem intrusive, such as regular room checks or the surrender upon arrival of items that may present a risk either to themselves or others at the hospital. However, such limitations are explained carefully to patients on admission and are signposted for others throughout the facility. For further information please refer to the Providing a Safe Environment Brochure available from front reception and the Consumer Hub on Level 1.

When you visit The Melbourne Clinic

Access to our hospital will be through the secure main entrance only. Visitors will be let in by our reception staff and you will be asked to sign in and sign out when entering and leaving the hospital. A visitors sticker will be provided to you after you sign in so our staff can identify who you are. This is an important part of our security and safety plans.

Escalation of care

We encourage patients and their loved ones to alert clinical staff if there is a worrying change in the patient's condition. Worrying changes can be psychological or physical; they include deterioration in mood, thoughts and feelings, behaviors that are unusual for the person or medical concerns.

We understand that you know your loved one best and you may notice worrying changes before anyone else does. Escalation of care is a communication process that helps you share those concerns so we can provide assistance.

How can you alert staff:

- Speak directly to the nurse caring for your friend or family member
- Press the emergency button located on the wall in the bedroom or bathroom
- Press the emergency button in the main corridors throughout the hospital.

Ensuring patient welfare and safety

The Melbourne Clinic is committed to meeting its patient welfare, safety and regulatory responsibilities as well as ensuring the comfort and well-being of everyone on its premises.

To help this happen, the care team needs patients and visitors to understand that operational guidelines have been set for the comfort, safety and legal protection of all.

Sometimes these will mean certain limitations on individual behaviour, such as:

- Treating all patients, visitors and staff with respect. The Melbourne Clinic has a zero tolerance to aggression.
- Observing set visiting hours (this ensures in-patients are free to attend medical meetings as well as vital therapy sessions).

Your co-operation in observing the hospital's guidelines and reinforcing them with the person you're visiting is appreciated because it contributes to The Melbourne Clinic's ability to deliver an optimal level of care and safety. If you are ever unsure how or why a guideline applies, please speak to the Nurse Unit Manager or After Hours Manager.



Patient leave arrangements

Each patient's admitting doctor, together with their multidisciplinary team, will determine the type and duration of any leave they may take during their admission. This assessment will be reviewed regularly and modified in line with their condition. Nursing staff assess the patient's status immediately prior to their leave and are able to refuse leave if that is in the patient's best interests.

If you are unsure about whether your loved one can have leave, please ask their contact nurse.

It is important that you do not take a patient out of the hospital without checking with nursing staff first.

Any patients who are on Accompanied Leave must have someone with them at all times. This will mean that you will be responsible for the patient for the entire duration of that leave and will need to be alert to what they are doing and how they are feeling. As part of this responsibility, before you leave the hospital, you must sign them out in the presence of a nurse.

You must also ensure that your loved one is returned to the hospital, accompanying them back inside and signing them back in with a nurse upon their return. Should the patient experience any difficulties during their leave, please inform their nurse.

If you are unable to return at the agreed time, please call the hospital to advise of the delay.

If you become concerned about changes in your loved one's behaviour at any time during the leave period, staff will be available to speak to you. Just call the hospital on 03 9429 4688.

Your rights and responsibilities

It is important that, as a family member, support person and/or carer, you understand that – while your relative or friend remains in the care of this hospital – their multidisciplinary care team will respect your relationship with that person as well as your right to:

- Ask questions and be informed (with the patients consent) about their mental health condition, treatment and ongoing care
- Provide any member of the multidisciplinary team information that may assist in the care, assessment and treatment of your relative or friend
- Be present (with the patients consent) during care, assessment and treatment processes
- Receive appropriate language and/or cultural support
- Have agreed confidentiality observed
- Seek further opinions
- Place limits on your availability
- Provide feedback to the service without fear of being discriminated against
- Be treated with respect and consideration in a fair and open manner.

Conversely, as a family member, support person and/or carer, you have a responsibility to:

- Work positively to support your relative or friend
- Communicate concerns promptly to a relevant member of the patients' multidisciplinary team
- Consider the professional opinions of care team members
- Co-operate, as far as possible, with reasonable treatment programs
- Seek help as needed
- Keep learning.

Self care tips

Caring for/living with, or supporting someone who has a mental health diagnosis has its challenges. These challenges are not all about the person being cared for – sometimes your own carer/support role will have unintended consequences for you, your family and friends.

The Melbourne Clinic is committed not only to providing quality in-patient as well as out-patient care but also to encouraging carers to take good care of themselves and to seek help and advice as soon as it's needed.

Carers can take steps that can help optimise their resilience:

- Take time to reflect and acknowledge your feelings and any frustrations.
- Use a journal to track your care-giving, observations, challenges and responses
- Avoid bottling up your emotions – talk to a trained psychologist, qualified counsellor, a trusted friend or mentor who will respect your situation and your privacy - ideally someone who has experience in being a carer for another person with a mental health diagnosis
- Mixing with other carers can help you find understanding and valuable insights
- Maintaining friendships and social activities beyond that circle is also important
- Ensure you eat properly, drink plenty of water and get adequate sleep. If you're not sleeping well seek medical advice
- Regular exercise helps break down “stress chemicals” in the body and gives you an activity that is not care-related but which will help maintain your wellbeing
- Avoid self-medicating or over indulging. Overuse of food, alcohol or other substances is a sign of imbalance.

- Take regular breaks, especially if the situation is highly stressful, to help you gain perspective. Avoid waiting until you are feeling overwhelmed.
- Debrief with someone you trust after a stressful incident
- Be aware that your reaction to a highly stressful situation may be delayed or triggered by something else altogether. If this happens, do not hesitate to seek help from an appropriate healthcare professional.

We value your feedback

The Melbourne Clinic invites you, as a family member, carer or friend, to share your insights and any feedback with our team.

You can do this by:

- Speaking to a member of our multidisciplinary team
- Make an appointment to speak to our Consumer or Carer Consultant. Appointments can be made by speaking with our reception or nursing staff who will coordinate an appointment.
- In writing to either the hospital's Consumer or Carer Consultant or Director of Nursing by sending a letter to them via:

The Melbourne Clinic
130 Church Street
Richmond VIC 3121



Useful contacts and supports for you

The hospital's Consumer/Carer Consultants, with input from families and carers, have compiled listings of useful and reputable resources for you on the following pages. These may also be used as an adjunct to the hospital's regular information sessions for families and carers.

Please Note: Information obtained via the internet can sometimes be inaccurate or misleading. Keep an open mind about what you are reading, particularly if you are unsure about the credibility of the source. Try to check what you've read with your loved one's doctor or mental health practitioner to ensure you are getting the correct information.

Service	About	Contact	Website
Grow Australia	Provides free peer support groups for carers of people who are experiencing a mental illness.	1800 558 268	www.grow.org.au
National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum	The combined voice for consumers and carers who want to participate in the development of mental health policy and the mental health sector in Australia.	02 6285 3100	www.nmhccf.org.au
Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia	Work closely with carers, families and friends, as well as the person with a mental illness, including those who are hard to reach.	03 8486 4200	www.mifa.org.au

Service	About	Contact	Website
Mind Australia	Community-managed specialist mental health service providers supporting people dealing with the day-to-day impacts of mental illness, as well as their families and carers.	1300 286 463	www.mindaustralia.org.au
SANE Australia	A national charity working for a better life for people affected by mental illness, their family and friends. They operate a helpline.	1800 187 263	www.sane.org
The Mental Health Act	Legal framework for care and treatment of people living with mental illness.	1300 656 692	www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health
The Mental Health Foundation of Australia	Supports consumers and families, professionals and organisations concerned with mental health.	03 9826 1422	www.mhfa.org.au
Wellways	Work with a diverse range of people living with mental health issues or various disabilities, and their families, friends and carers, to bring about positive change and build good lives in their community.	1300 111 400	www.wellways.org

Service	About	Contact	Website
Addiction			
Al-Anon	A mutual support program for people whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking.	1300 252 666	www.al-anon.org.au
Alcoholics Anonymous	A fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.	1300 222 222	www.aa.org.au
Directline	Confidential and free, 24-hour telephone counselling, information, support and referral service for anyone wishing to discuss an alcohol or drug-related issue, including family members.	1800 888 236	www.directline.org.au
Narcotics Anonymous	A nonprofit fellowship or society of people for whom drugs had become a problem.	1300 652 820	www.navic.net.au

Service	About	Contact	Website
Anxiety			
Anxiety Disorder Association of Victoria (ADAVIC)	Provide support, information and resources to individuals suffering from or affected by anxiety, depression and related issues.	03 9853 8089	www.adavic.org.au
Anxiety Recovery Centre (ARCVic)	Provides support, recovery and educational services to people and families living with anxiety disorders.	1300 269 438	www.arcvic.com.au
Gambling			
Gambler's Help	Services include online, telephone and face-to-face counselling including financial counselling, advice and information, peer support from volunteers with personal experience of gambling.	1800 858 858	www.gambler-shelp.com.au
Gambler's Help Youthline	Counselling for people under 25 with gambling issues or are worried about a family member or loved one.	1800 262 376	www.gambler-shelp.com.au/get-help-under-25s

Service	About	Contact	Website
Grief			
Griefline	A loss and grief national telephone counselling service. They provide support, care and listen to people experiencing loss and grief at any stage in life.	03 9935 7400	www.griefline.org.au
Mood Disorders			
Beyond Blue	Works in partnership with health services, schools, workplaces, universities and community organisations. Provides information and support to people, and their family and friends, living with anxiety and depression.	1300 224 636	www.beyondblue.org.au
Black Dog Institute	Promote wellbeing through research, health professional training, and community education.	02 9382 4530	www.blackdoginstitute.org.au
Eating Disorders			
Eating Disorders Victoria (EDV)	Offer support and information on all types of eating disorders, early warning signs, treatment options, how to support someone with an eating disorder and much more.	1300 550 236	www.eatingdisorders.org.au

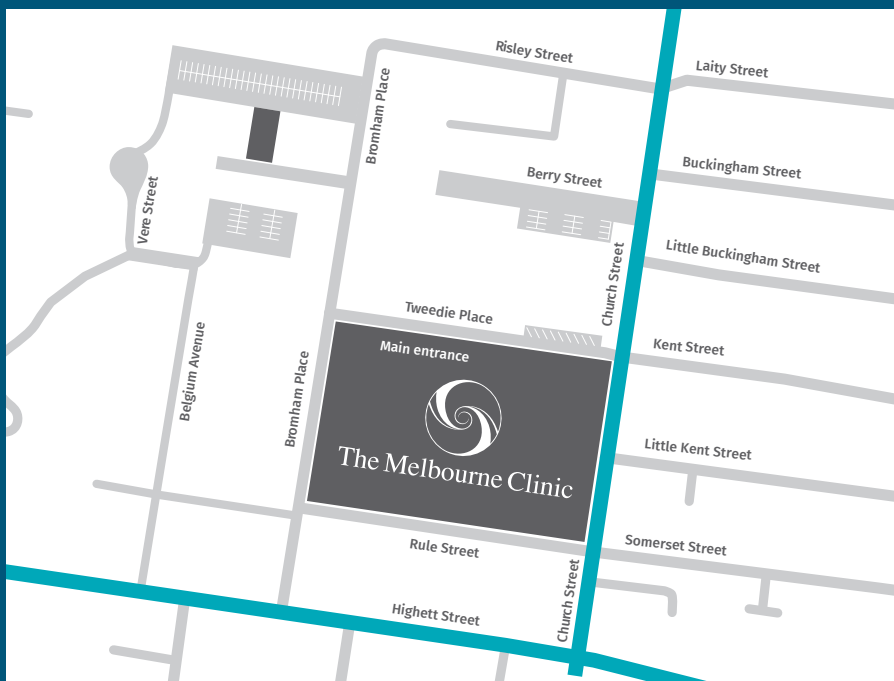
Service	About	Contact	Website
Postnatal and Antenatal			
PANDA	Supports people and families who are affected by anxiety and depression during pregnancy and in the first year of parenthood. PANDA operates a national helpline.	1300 726 306	www.panda.org.au
OCD and Anxiety			
OCD and Anxiety Helpline	Assistance to understand and manage symptoms of OCD, anxiety and depression.	1300 269 438	www.arcvic.org.au
Young Adult			
Headspace	Mental health support for young people aged 12-25. They provide information and resources covering a wide range of issues and topics.	1800 650 890	www.headspace.org.au
Kids Helpline	Private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5-25.	1800 55 1800	www.kidshelpline.com.au
Orygen Youth Mental Health	Provides a specialist youth mental health clinical service and a training and communications program, and is an internationally renowned youth mental health research centre.	1300 679 436	www.orygen.org.au

Service	About	Contact	Website
Men			
Heads Up Guys	A resource for supporting men in their fight against depression by providing tips, tools, information about professional services and stories of success.		www.headsupguys.org
Mensline	Telephone and online counselling, support, and referral service for men with family and relationship concerns.	1300 789 978	www.mensline.org.au
Domestic Violence			
Safe Steps	A first response service for women, young people and children experiencing family violence.	1800 015 188	www.safesteps.org.au
LGBTQIA+			
Minus 18	Champions for LGBTIQ youth Australia wide creating events to provide a safe space to connect, peer support, workshops that give practical ways to support LGBTIQ people and campaign to reduce stigma.		www.minus18.org.au
Switchboard	Provides a peer-driven support service for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse, intersex, queer and asexual people, their families, allies and communities.	1800 184 527	www.switchboard.org.au

Service	About	Contact	Website
LGBTQIA+			
Thorne Harbour Health	Deliver community-led and culturally appropriate services that improve the health and wellbeing of LGBTI people.	1800 134 840	www.thorneharbour.org
QLife	Provides anonymous and free LGBTI peer support and referral for people wanting to talk about sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings or relationships.	1800 184 527	www.qlife.org.au
Zoe Belle Gender Collective	Online service providing support, referrals, recommendations and resources for the greater trans and gender diverse community.		www.zbgc.com.au
Sexual Assault			
CASA House	24 hour crisis response to survivors of sexual assault in the past two weeks as well as counselling/advocacy support to survivors of childhood sexual assault and historical adult sexual assault.	03 9635 3610	www.casahouse.com.au
Sexual Assault Crisis Line	After hours telephone crisis counselling support, information, advocacy and referral to anyone who has experienced any form of sexual assault at any point in their lives.	1800 806 292	www.sacl.com.au

Service	About	Contact	Website
Crisis			
Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team (CATT)	24 hour Psychiatric triage (information, assessment and referral) providing immediate help during a mental health crisis.	1300 363 746	
Lifeline	Provides 24 hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.	13 11 14	www.lifeline.org.au
Suicide Callback	National telehealth provider offering free phone and online counselling for people who are feeling suicidal, worried or caring for someone who is suicidal, have lost someone to suicide.	1300 659 467	www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au
Suicide Line	A 24 hour telephone, video and online counselling service offering support to people at risk of suicide, people concerned about someone's risk of suicide, and people bereaved by suicide.	1300 651 251	www.suicideline.org.au





The Melbourne
Clinic
by Healthscope

130 Church Street,
Richmond VIC 3121

P 03 9429 4688 | **F** 03 9427 7558

themelbourneclinic.com.au

ABN 85 006 405 152



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