

Call: 132 246 (132 BHN)

Client and Carer Handbook



Your **health**,
your **choice**,
your **way**.



bhn.org.au



Welcome to BHN

Better Health Network (BHN) is a not-for-profit organisation that has provided primary and allied health care services to the communities across south-eastern Melbourne for the past 50 years. Our vision is 'Your health, your choice, your way' and we aim to make everyone feel welcome, safe and supported.

BHN is proud to be accredited to five National Standards:

- National Safety and Quality Health Standards (NSQHS)
- National Standards for Mental Health Services (NSMHS)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Practice Standards (NDIS)
- Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards
- Rainbow Tick.

We are committed to keeping children safe and meeting the Social Service Standards.

Our Services

We offer a wide range of services to support healthy living, general wellbeing and social connection, including:

- Specialist medical services
- Dental and allied health
- Nursing, mental health and counselling services
- Addiction support
- Aged care social supports, and
- Disability services.

Visit bhn.org.au or speak to our reception team for a full list of services.



Privacy Your privacy is important to us.

Information We Collect

We will ask you personal questions so that we can help you.

Your personal and health information will be kept securely on file.

No one can ask to see your information unless required by law or you say we can share it.

We will ask your permission before we share sensitive information such as intersex status, gender identity, sexual orientation etc.

Who Can See Your Information?

Only people involved in your care can view your file.

Auditors (accreditation) can view your file to check to see if we are doing the right things.

Auditors do not collect your personal or medical information.

Use of Your Information

Your information can be used for gathering data/statistics by the Department of Health.

This data does not include any of your personal information.

Your Rights

- You have the right to use a preferred name (we'll explain if your legal name is needed)
- You can view or correct your file
- We will always ask before sharing sensitive information (e.g. gender identity, sexual orientation etc.)

Sharing Information

Sometimes we need to get information from another medical clinic you have visited.

If you visit another clinic, they might ask us for information about you.

Gathering medical information is like assembling a jigsaw puzzle — each piece contributes to a clearer, more complete picture, allowing us to provide the best possible care.

When We Share Without Consent

By law, we must share information if there's a serious risk to someone's safety (e.g., family violence under the Family Violence Protection Act 2008).

Read more: [BHN Privacy Policy](#) or email quality@bhn.org.au

If We Receive Information We Do Not Need

If we receive information about you that we do not need, we will destroy it securely.

Using Your Information

We will not use your information for any reason, other than your care.

We will not use your information for marketing or sales purposes. If we need to use your information for any other reason, we will ask you first.



Correct Information

Each time you visit or call us; we will ask you if any of your details have changed.

If your details have changed, let us know in case we need to call you or write to you.

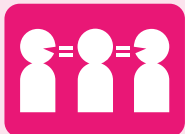
For more information ask our staff, or email:

quality@bhn.org.au or visit [BHN Privacy Policy](#)

You can also contact the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner on **1300 006 842** or visit ovic.gov.au

Interpreter

Let us know if you need an interpreter – free of charge.



Your Rights as a Client or Carer:

You have the right to:

- Feel welcomed, safe and supported
- Be treated with respect and care at all times
- Receive safe, quality healthcare without fear of discrimination
- Be treated in a clean, comfortable and culturally safe environment
- Have your privacy protected
- Get clear information about your health
- Be involved in decisions about your care
- Have the right to refuse treatment if you feel it is not right for you
- Have an advocate (family, friend, interpreter, support person, formal advocate) present when attending the service
- Request that your care or support be provided by a different staff member
- Give feedback or make a complaint whilst continuing to use our service
- Ask questions if you do not understand something.

Your Responsibilities as a Client or Carer:

You are responsible for:

- Treating staff and others with respect
- Respecting the diverse backgrounds of those around you
- Giving honest and accurate health information
- Asking questions if you do not understand something
- Following the treatment plans if you agree with them
- Understanding what might happen if you do not follow the treatment plan, keep appointments or let us know if you need to cancel or reschedule.

The Australian Charter of Health Care Rights outlines the Rights of people using the Australian healthcare system.

You can read more at www.health.vic.gov.au



Information for Carers

Carers support people with medical, mental health, disability and aged care needs. Carers can include family, friends, relatives, neighbours and those providing a foster kinship or permanent carer arrangement.

Carers share the same rights and responsibilities as clients & should:

- Act in the best interests of the client
- Respect the human worth and dignity of the client
- Consider the opinions provided by the clinicians
- Update clinicians if there is a change in the client's medical condition
- Let the clinician know if there are concerns about the client's condition or care plan
- Recognise the clinicians' skill in providing care and treatment of the client
- Support the client to achieve their goals through treatment
- Seek professional help if you believe the client has a mental health problem.

An advocate is a person who can speak on behalf of the client and express any concerns raised by the client. An advocate can be a carer.

Statement of Rights (Aged Care)

Older people have the right to:

- Have their needs at the centre of the services they receive at BHN
- Independence, autonomy, empowerment and freedom of choice
- Equitable access
- Quality and safe funded aged care
- Respect for privacy and information
- Person-centred communication and ability to raise issues without reprisal
- Advocates, significant persons and social connection.

Supporting People with Disabilities

We are committed to:

- Supporting choice and decision making
- Providing clear, easy to understand information
- Helping raise and resolve concerns.



Consent and Decision Making

You have the right to say 'yes' or 'no' to treatment.

Our staff are professionally trained and can explain all the benefits of treatment. They will give you the right options, explain the risks of each treatment and give you the option to refuse treatment if you feel it is not right for you.

See **BHN's Informed Consent Policy** and **[Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights](#)**.

There may be times where you are unable to give consent for medical treatment.

You can nominate a substitute decision maker, power of attorney or guardian before treatment starts.

Staying Safe

Everyone has a right to feel safe. If you are experiencing abuse either at home or at BHN, it is important you tell us so we can ensure your safety. Abuse comes in many forms, such as neglect, sexual, financial and discrimination.

Abusive behaviour is not tolerated, and you will be supported through the reporting and resolution process.

Accidents

If you are not well or hurt whilst in our care, please tell one of our staff. They will get you the right help and report it to the right people. Reporting accidents or any hazards helps keep everyone safe.

Feedback or Complaints

If you have concerns about your health or mental health or have concerns about your care plan please let your clinician know, we are here to help you.

We want to hear your feedback about our services because it helps us improve our services and better support you.

Your thoughts and experiences show us what we are doing well and what we can do better.

By sharing your feedback, you help us make positive changes for everyone.

bhn.org.au/contact-us/



Scan to access
our Feedback
Form

Contact Us

Call **132 246** (132 BHN) Email: **info@bhn.org.au**

Hours: 8:30 – 5pm Monday to Friday

Dental Clinic: 8am – 4:30pm Monday to Friday

Locations:

bhn.org.au/locations/

Other Contacts for Complaints

Quality Team: **quality@bhn.org.au**

NDIS: **1800 035 544**

Health Complaints Commissioner: **1300 582 113**

Aged Care Commission: **1800 951 822**

Commission for Children and Young People: **1300 782 978**

Commissioner for Mental Health: **1800 246 054**

Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission: **1300 292 153**



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first peoples and Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and waterways on which we live, and we acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded. We honour and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Our Commitment to Diversity

Better Health Network is committed to providing an inclusive service, and work environment where individuals feel accepted, safe, affirmed and celebrated.

Better Health Network is committed to the fair and equitable treatment of everyone, including those with diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds, lived and living experience, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, body size or shape, religion or spiritual beliefs, socio-economic status, age & abilities.

