

Where to go & who to see for support

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Navigating the mental health care system can be confusing, however it is important to remember that everyone's journey is unique and there are many different types of professionals who can provide a variety of mental health treatments and support to best suit your needs.

Service providers and services are generally divided into two categories: Clinical mental health care and community (non-medical) mental health care.

If you are not happy with any of your mental health clinical service providers, it is your right to have a second opinion and you may choose to change providers.

Who to see (clinical services)

Expand each clinical service to see more detail.

General Practitioner (GP)

If you are feeling unwell a GP is a good place to start. GP's are trained to treat a variety of physical and mental health issues. They can provide you with ongoing mental health care.

No referral required

Your GP might refer you to a psychiatrist under Medicare for a consultation and review and recommend your best treatments options.

When you first see a GP about your mental health concerns, consider booking a longer appointment to enable you the time to discuss your mental health issues.

The Royal Australia College of General Practitioners www.racgp.org.au 1800 472 247

Service provision/ treatment

- make a diagnosis
- provide general medical monitoring and treatments
- provide ongoing mental health treatments
- prescribe medications
- prescribe psychiatric medications
- in some cases they may provide brief counselling session
- perform a physical exam to ensure there are no physical reasons for your symptoms
- create a mental health plan (which may help you receive free or reduced-fee counselling through Medicare's Better Access to Mental Health Care Initiative)
- provide referrals to specialist physical and mental health providers
- provide support and information to families and carers

Treatment Costs

- some GP's bulk bill. You need a Medicare Card or Health Care Card to claim Medicare benefits
- some GP's billing depends on the length of the appointment
- ask your GP or their receptionist about fees

Psychologist and clinical psychologist

Psychologists are experts in human emotions and behaviours. They are trained in a variety of methods and treatments to help support individuals, relationships, and families with emotional and behavioural issues. They also help support chronic mental illness management and recovery.

No referral is required.

However, you may be referred by another mental health professional or as part of a care plan.

Clinical psychologists have training in the assessment and diagnosis of mental illnesses and psychological problems.

To find a Psychologist in your area

Australian Psychological Society www.psychology.org.au/FindAPsychologist/

Service provision/ treatment

- provide various and individualised treatment that may include "talk therapies", psychotherapy, CBT, Trauma treatments etc. See the section "Treatment Types" for more information
- provide Individual and group therapy
- provide psychological testing, assessments and diagnosis of mental illness
- clinical psychologists often specialise in certain types of mental illnesses or treatment models

Treatment Costs

- cost can vary depending on the situation and the professional

- ask about bulk billing, payment plans and fee schedules

Psychiatrist

Public or Private

A Psychiatrist is a medical doctor who has undergone extra training and specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of mental health conditions. Psychiatrists provide both in-hospital and out-patient care.

A referral is required from a GP. You may see a public psychiatrist while in a public hospital ward.

If you are engaged in the public mental health system a psychiatrist will be overseeing your treatment and you will have the opportunity to participate in consultations with them throughout your treatment.

To Find a Psychiatrist in your area

Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists www.ranzcp.org can help you locate a psychiatrist in your area. Also you can ask your GP or psychologist for recommendations.

Service provision/ treatment

- assessment and diagnosis of mental health conditions
- prescribing and monitoring medication
- may provide various treatments such as psychotherapy, interpersonal treatment, CBT, trauma treatments, ECT in addition to pharmaceuticals
- if an individual's symptoms are severe the psychiatrist can admit a person to a psychiatric hospital for their safety

Treatment Costs

- psychiatrists seen in the public hospital system are free of cost
- some Psychiatrists bulk bill
- the cost of seeing a psychiatrist can vary greatly. Ask about their fees and what you can claim via Medicare

Mental Health Nurse

Mental health nurses are nurses who have undertaken extra training to care for people with mental health conditions. Many work in psychiatric hospital units, while others work directly with psychiatrists and GP's.

Referrals are generally not needed, however, you may work with a mental health nurse through the hospital system or at the request of your GP or psychiatrist.

Service provision/ treatment

- dispensing and monitoring medication
- providing individuals, families and carers with information about symptoms and treatment
- some may provide Psychological therapies

Treatment Costs

- treatment cost vary dependant on the situation
- treatment by a mental health nurse in the public hospital system is free of charge
- there may be a charge when seeing a mental health nurse outside of the hospital
- ask for more information about fees and billing

Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team

Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team (CATT) provides crisis emergency assessment to individuals in the community

Monash CATT Team call Monash Triage on 1300 369 012

No Referral is required

Service provision/ treatment

- the CATT Team can assess people in the community to help prevent hospital admissions, however if the person is at risk of harm to themselves or others they will be admitted to the nearest hospital
- the CATT Team is available 24 hours a day

Treatment Costs

There is no cost for this service

Mental Health Triage

The psychiatric triage service is a 24 hour, 7 day a week service which consumers, carers, family members, social service professionals and health professionals can call for a mental health assessment of an individual's needs.

This is often a common entry point into support services for people suffering mental health issues

No referral is required

The service will provide information, assessment and referrals to appropriate public services. The service provides help to people 0 to 65 and 65+ only in after hours. In the case of consumers who are 16 and under consent of a parent or legal guardian is required before referrals can be made.

Service provision/ treatment

- this service can be used for both urgent and non-urgent situations
- psychiatric triage professionals often provides individuals with information and support about where to go and who to see in the clinical and community mental health system

Treatment Costs

There is no cost for this service

Who to see (community services)

Expand each community service to see more detail.

Social Worker

Social Workers are trained to deliver a range of services. They engage people and work within the mental health system to address life challenges and improve wellbeing.

Often a referral is required. Talk to your mental health care providers, Centrelink or EACH (see below for more information). Check with the social worker to see if Medicare covers their services, or review your private health cover.

Social Workers often liaise with community organisations to help people identify needs, set goals and secure services. You may be referred to a social worker through a health care provider or another organisation.

Service Provision/ Treatments

- can provide support around: family and relationship issues, living arrangements, financial and legal problems, or other life stresses
- some social workers can provide psychoeducation, cognitive behavioural therapy, skills training and work readiness, as well as relationship and mental health management strategies

Treatment Costs

Often times social workers, work for community social services in which there is no cost to the client.

Private social workers may vary from worker to worker. Ask about fees, Medicare rebates and if your private insurance covers any of the cost.

Occupational Therapist

Occupational Therapists in mental health help individuals to manage their condition, enabling them to participate in day-to-day living.

Talk to your mental health care providers to see if a referral is required. Under a mental health care treatment plan provided by your GP you can make a claim to Medicare to help cover the cost.

Service Provision/ Treatments

- provides support to manage symptoms of mental illness
- provides psychological strategies catered to the individual's needs

Treatment Costs

Cost may vary from therapist to therapist. Ask about fees, Medicare rebates and if your private insurance covers any of the cost.

Community Mental Health Practitioner / Support Worker

Community Mental Health Practitioners or support workers, work in community organisations to support people and carers to manage the effects of mental illness. Community Mental Health Practitioners or support workers support the individual to plan for and achieve their life and wellness goals.

Contact the community mental health organisation to see if a referral is required.

Community mental health organisations can cater to a variety of needs. Some work with youth only, while others work with adults 16 to 65 and some 65+. Different organisations have different programs that address a variety of needs, such as acute mental health support, mental health and addiction, or trauma.

It is important to review the organisation's website and contact them to see if you qualify for their programs and if they are well suited to your needs.

Service Provision/ Treatments

- individual community based support
- they can provide talk therapies
- group and individual supports
- can help support the individual to plan for and achieve their life and wellness goals
- respite
- family and care support services
- provide supports to help individuals to over-come barriers to wellness
- may help support individuals towards vocational goals

Treatment Costs

Generally services are provided at no cost to clients or families and carers.

Counsellors

Counsellors and therapists are not medical doctors and cannot prescribe medication. They mainly offer talk-based therapies or specialized counselling options.

Speak to your GP about counsellors who are covered by Medicare. Check with the counsellor to see if Medicare covers their services. Or review your private health cover.

Counsellors can work in a variety of settings; private practices, community health organisations and centres, schools, universities and youth centres.

Counsellors and therapists can have a range of qualifications and a variety of specialities. For example a relationship counsellor and a grief counsellor will have different qualifications and areas of focus.

Service Provision/ Treatments

- typically use talk therapies
- can provide grief, relationship, parenting, substance abuse, addiction, and mental health support
- may use or recommend allied health therapies
- it is acceptable to inquire about their training and what methods they plan to use in supporting you

Treatment Costs

Cost may vary from counsellor to counsellor. Ask about fees, Medicare rebates and if your private insurance covers any of the cost.

Find a counsellor: [The Australian Counselling Association www.theaca.net.au](http://www.theaca.net.au) 1300 784 333

Peer support worker / Carer consultant

A peer support worker is an individual who is employed by an organisation or hospital because they have a personal "lived experience" of mental illness

Carer Consultants are often employed by organisations to help support carer needs and understanding of the mental health and social services. Carer consultants often have been, or are still in a caring role.

No referral is required.

Peer support workers and carer consultants often go through additional training to prepare them for their role. Drawing from their lived experience with mental health issues and their intimate understanding of recovery, peer support workers and carer consultants can assist, inspire and help individuals towards wellness.

Service Provision/ Treatments

- peer support workers/carers consultants offer individual support through listening from the lived experience point of view
- peer support workers/carers consultants draw on many tools and strategies to help people towards wellness and recovery
- peer support workers/carers consultants often work in hospitals or in community mental health organisations

Treatment Costs

There is generally no cost to the client.

Where to go for mental health support

Expand the service types to see where you can find them.

Clinical Services

General Practitioner's (GP) Clinics

The Royal Australia College of General Practitioners www.racgp.org.au 1800 472 247

Emergency Departments (ED)

Hospital emergency departments can provide mental health crisis care. If you or the person you are caring for is experiencing a crisis (and an ambulance is not required) then the ED can often provide assessment and treatment. You may receive immediate treatment or you may be allowed to go home under the care of your mental health support provider, be referred to a GP or to another mental health service.

No referral is required

Acute and emergency care is provided by public hospitals. If you go to a hospital without a psychiatric ward you may have to wait and be taken by ambulance, at a possible cost to you, to another hospital

Hospitals

Public: One of the key roles of public psychiatric hospitals is to provide crisis management to ensure the safety of the individual and/or community. However, today the majority of mental health care is delivered in the community as opposed to a hospital setting.

No referral is required

The range of care can vary greatly from hospital to hospital, and it's important to note that not all hospitals have psychiatric units. Some hospitals are only able to provide immediate mental health crisis management, while others have a full range of programs and support for both inpatient and outpatient care. Speak to your mental health support provider or contact your local hospital to ask about hospital-based treatment options near you.

Private:

Private hospitals require the client to have private hospital cover and clients will be admitted by their psychiatrist who will also oversee their treatment

Community Services

Community Mental health Organisations

In some cases a referral is required. Talk to your mental health provider, contact the organisation to see what they require or contact EACH 1300 785 358

Community Social Services

There are a range of community social services that help individuals and their families to meet a range of needs. See the [Directory on this website](#) to see what supports are offered in the South Eastern Region of Melbourne. The list will provide you with the service name, contact details and live links to their website. Ask about cost for services as many of the services are offered at no cost to the client.

In some cases a referral is required. Talk to your mental health provider, contact the organisation to see what they require or contact EACH 1300 785 358

PARCs (Prevention and Recovery Care Services)

Prevention and Recovery Care Services (PARCS) are short term, recovery focused residential services for people who are living with acute mental health issues. They are often called a step up or step down unit. Individuals may stay at a PARCS facility to avoid hospitalisation (Step Up), or as a place to go after being discharged from hospital if they are not ready to return home (Step Down). If you think you may benefit from staying at a PARCS speak to your doctor, psychologist, hospital staff, social worker or your community mental health practitioner?

Referral is required. Talk to your mental health care providers.

Support Groups

There are a range of support groups for both consumers and carers. Support groups are generally free and run by group members. Some are organised and mentored by health care professionals. Most support groups are organised by community support organisations, hospitals or clinics. Some require a referral from your care provider, while others just require consumers and carers to call the support group and ask to attend. Most support groups are free or require a very small fee such as \$2.00 to supply coffee, tea and biscuits.

Hospitals with Psychiatric wards in the greater Melbourne area

Public Hospitals

Hospital	Address	Phone	Website	Public/ Private
The Alfred	55 Commercial Rd, Melbourne VIC 3004	(03) 9076 2000	www.alfred.org.au	Public
Box Hill Hospital Upton House	131 Thames St, Box Hill VIC 3128	(03) 9895 4956	www.easternhealth.org.au	Public
Casey Hospital	52 Kangan Drive Berwick, VIC 3806	(03) 8768 1200	http://www.monashhealth.org/page/Caseyhospital	Public
Dandenong Hospital	135 David Street, Dandenong VIC 3175	(03) 9554 1000.	www.monashhealth.org/page/Dandenong	Public
Frankston Hospital	2 Hastings Road Frankston VIC 3199	1300 792 977	www.peninsulahealth.org.au	Public
Maroondah Hospital	Davey Drive, Ringwood East, VIC 3135	1300 342 255	www.easternhealth.org.au	Public
Austin Hospital	145 Studley Road Heidelberg Road VIC 3084	(03) 9496 5000	www.austin.org.au	Public
The Northern Hospital	185 Cooper St, Epping 3076	(03) 8405 8000	www.nh.org.au	Public
North Western Mental Health The Royal Melbourne Hospital	Grattan Street Parkville 3050	(03) 9342 7705	www.nwmh.mh.org.au	Public
Mercy Public Hospital	L 2 12 Shelley St, Richmond, VIC	(03) 8416 7777	www.mercyhealth.com.au	Public

Hospital	Address	Phone	Website	Public/ Private
Moorabbin Hospital	823-865 Centre Rd Bentleigh East, Victoria, 3165	(03) 9928 8111	www.monashhealth.org	Public
St Vincent Hospital	41 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy VIC 3065	(03) 9231 2211	www.svhm.org.au	Public

Private Hospitals

Hospital	Address	Phone	Website	Public/ Private
Albert Road Clinic	31 Albert Road MELBOURNE VIC 3004	(03) 9256 8311	www.albertroadclinic.com.au	Private
Beleura Private Hospital	925 Nepean Hwy mORNINGTON VIC 3931	(03) 5976 0888	www.beleuraprivate.com.au	Private
Delmont Hospital	300 Warrigal Road, Glen Iris VIC 314	(03) 9805 7333	www.delmonthospital.com.au	Private
The Melbourne Clinic	130 Church St Richmond VIC	(03) 9429 4688	www.themelbourneclinic.com.au	Private
Pine Lodge Clinic St. John of God	1480 Heatherton Rd, Dandenong North VIC 3175	(03) 8793 9444	www.sjog.org.au/hospitals/pinelodge_clinic.aspx	Private
The South Eastern Private Hospital	Crn. Princes Hwy & Heatherton Rd, Noble Park VIC 3174	(03) 9549 6555	www.southeasternprivate.com.au	Private
Ramsey Health Clinic	31-33 Albert Rd Melbourne VIC	(03) 9256 8311	www.albertroadclinic.com.au	Private

Things to consider when choosing a psychologist or a

psychiatrist

- ask your GP if they have someone they can recommend.
- if you have an emergency psychiatric hospital admission you may be assigned a psychiatrist if you do not have one, or for the time you are in the hospital
- think about what attributes are most important to you in a psychiatrist
 1. are they public or private
 2. what is their fee structure
 3. do they have acceptable availability
 4. are they skilled to handle your mental health issues
 5. what is their approach to medication
 6. what types of treatments they offer
 7. do they offer a variety of treatment choices
 8. will they work with your carer and GP to help build a plan for treatment and care
 9. are they affiliated with the hospital of your choice
 10. is there a gender you prefer

Where to go and who to see for access to community mental health and social service

Centrelink

<http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/dhs/centrelink>

Centrelink can provide financial assistance to people with disabilities and their carers. Each case is reviewed individually by a Centrelink worker. Many of your questions can be answered on their website or by making an appointment and visiting your local Centrelink office.

South Eastern Melbourne PHN Mental Health Intake

A central phone line that refers or links people with primary mental health services in South Eastern Melbourne.

Intake for: Cardinia, Casey, Frankston, Mornington Peninsula, Bayside, Glen Eira, Kingston, Stonnington, Port Philip and Dandenong.

SEMPHN Mental Health Intake.

Phone SEMPHN Mental Health Intake Ph: 1800 862 363 (business hours) <http://www.semphn.org.au/resources/mental-health/semphn-mental-health-intake.html>

National Disability Insurance Scheme Victoria (NDIS) 1800 800 110 www.ndis.gov.au

<https://myplace.ndis.gov.au/ndisstorefront/about-us/our-sites/vic.html>

NDIS Mental Health Community Intake

The Mental Health Community Intake service is a central access point for people with a severe mental illness, their carer and family, and referrers seeking community mental health services.

EACH 1300 785 358 www.each.com.au/mental-health-community-intake/

Intake for: Greater Dandenong, Casey and Cardinia, Whittlesea, Nillumbik, Darebin, Banyule, Boroondara, Manningham, Whitehorse, Monash, Maroondah, Knox, Yarra Ranges.

Neami National 1300 379 426

<http://www.neaminational.org.au/get-support/find-service/victorian-intak...>

Intake for: Wyndham, Hobsons Bay, Melbourne, Yarra, Maribyrnong, Brimbank, Moonee Valley, Moreland, Whittlesea, Nillumbik, Banyule, Darebin, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Glen Eira, Bayside, Kingston, Frankston, Mornington Peninsula

ACSO 1300 022 760 <http://www.acso.org.au>

Gippsland, Goulburn Valley, Grampians, Great South Coast, Hume, Loddon Mallee

All referrals or enquiries relating to community mental health services should be made to the dedicated telephone line 9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday.

The service provided includes:

- screening and determination of eligibility of new consumers for services
- screening and determination of prioritisation of needs of eligible consumers
- referral of eligible consumers to appropriate providers for a comprehensive intake assessment
- provision of screening information to service providers; e.g. safety factors, family/carers support, current consumer supports
- follow-up of referrals made to service providers to ensure efficient consumer access to services across the region
- provision of self-management support and follow-up services to eligible consumers who are placed on a wait list for service
- information and referral to other appropriate health and support services for ineligible consumers

This is not a crisis service. For urgent issues requiring emergency response, please call:

- Police 000
- Ambulance 000
- Crisis Assessment Team 1300 721 927
- Lifeline 13 11 14

Eligibility Criteria

People between 16 and 64 years who have a disability attributable to a diagnosed psychiatric condition, resulting in permanent impairment(s) such as reduced function in communication, social interaction, learning, self-care and/or self-management living.

Source URL: <https://mentalhealthcompass.com.au/mhis/where-go-who-see-support>