
Moving between hospital and home

Summary

- Treatment can be provided in home, and hospital or residential care.
 - Put together a list to make sure that you have everything in place before you leave hospital.
 - Make an appointment with your local doctor when you get home to follow up on any medications that you were given while you were in hospital.
 - Keep on top of your ongoing mental health treatment by staying in contact with your doctor or case manager.
 - Regularly review your mental health care plan with your doctor or case manager.
 - Get help in adjusting to life in the community through public and community support services, including doctors, counsellors, community care units, support groups and private psychiatrists.
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Recovering from a mental illness takes time. Everyone moves through the recovery process in their own way and at their own pace. Your mental health treatment might involve counselling and medication or it may require stays in a mental health or psychiatric hospital or residential care facility. If you are experiencing severe mental illness, you may require a combination of both home and hospital or residential care.

It is important to remember that recovery from a mental illness rarely moves in a straight line. There will be times when you can manage at home and times when you will need extra support in a hospital or residential care facility. How often you need intensive mental health treatment or support will depend on the type of illness and the severity of your condition.

Being discharged from a mental health hospital

Before you leave hospital, make sure that you have everything in place for when you are back at home. Talk to your family and friends about what your concerns are, make a list of everything that you will need to do, and speak to your doctor about how to get support services.

Staying connected with your mental health treatment team

Make an appointment with your local doctor when you get home to follow up on any medications you were given while you were in hospital.

Keep on top of your ongoing treatment by staying in contact with your doctor or case manager. They are responsible for putting together your mental health care plan and managing your treatment. Be honest with them about how you are feeling and listen to their advice. They will be able to help if you are not coping in the community. They can answer any questions relating to your mental health treatment, direct you to further support, and advise on further treatment if needed.

Significant changes in your health may mean you need to make a new mental health care plan. Even if there are no big changes to your situation, you should regularly review your care plan with your doctor or case manager to make sure it continues to meet your needs.

Read more about '[Mental health care plans and decisions](#)'.

Read more about [Case Managers](#).

Carers' support

Carers can benefit from support and services too. There are government and community programs that provide support, counselling, respite care and advice.

Your carers can get in touch with mental health support services across Victoria and online for advice from healthcare professionals, access to information and resources including:

- **SANE Helpline** – call 1800 18 SANE (7263) for details of support groups and other services for family carers in your local area.
- **Centrelink** – call 13 10 21 to find out about benefits and services for family carers as well as for people experiencing mental illness.
- **Carers Australia** – call 1800 242 636 for details of local Carers Associations and their services.
- **Commonwealth Carelink** – call 1800 052 222 for details of government services for people with a disability and their carers.
- **Victorian Mental Health Carers Network** – the peak organisation for mental health carers in Victoria.

Mental health community support services

After a hospital stay, you may need further support before you can manage living independently. Talk to your doctor or case manager about where to get help if you are not managing things. There is a range of public, not-for-profit and community support services available to help you adjust to life in the community and continue to live independently. These include:

- **Community mental health centres** – assessment and ongoing treatment as well as case management.
- **Community care units** – a comfortable, ‘homely’ place where people can get ready to re-enter the community. The units offer medium to long-term accommodation, clinical care and rehabilitation services for people with a serious mental illness and psychosocial disability.
- **Private psychiatrists** – psychiatric services including therapy, advice and medications. They can specialise in particular mental disorders, age groups or mental health therapies.
- **Mobile support and treatment** – intensive long-term support for people in specialist boarding houses and residential services.
- **Prevention and recovery care services (PARC)** – short-term place to stay for people who do not need a hospital admission. PARC provides clinical treatment and accommodation support to help minimise hospital admissions.
- **Residential rehabilitation** – a program that fosters community and family contact and helps develop skills to deal with daily living.
- **Home-based outreach** – support for people living at home. Outreach focuses on everyday activities and chores such as budgeting, cooking, personal care and relating to friends and family.
- **Psychosocial rehabilitation day programs** – a program to help people with severe psychiatric disorders to participate in the community and gain a level of independence.

Find more information about local services on the [Community care and support networks](#) page.

Read more about [Hospitals, clinics and residential options](#).

Where to get help

- Your GP (doctor)
- Your case manager

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