



Patient/Carer Information

**Everything you need to
know during your stay on
the Acute Ward**





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Inpatient Information

Welcome

Colac Area Health staff are dedicated to providing patients with the best possible care and service. This Patient Booklet provides you with information about the hospital that assists you in having a safe and comfortable stay.

Should you have any queries please discuss with a member of our staff.

If you have been receiving services e.g. home help, meals on wheels, district nursing, community nursing or any visiting services or community services prior to your admission, please advise the nurse as this assists us to provide continuity of care.

Conduct

Patients and visitors should expect that staff demonstrate the organisational values which are Respect, Integrity and Compassion. We ask that patients and visitors also respect these values. Physical and non-physical violence will not be tolerated. We have a zero tolerance for physical and non physical violence.

An individual behaviour contract and/or a warning notice may be issued by the Chief Executive or their delegate to any individual who has displayed aggressive and/or violent behaviour towards employees and other clients of Colac Area Health.

Colac Area Health has a zero tolerance towards any person bringing weapons onto the premises. If an individual is concealing weapons or there is evidence that they are in the possession of weaponry, police will be called and the individual will be asked to leave the premises.

Privacy/Freedom of Information

The staff of the hospital recognise every patient's right to have their privacy maintained and respected at all times. Colac Area Health protects your privacy by keeping personal information secure from unauthorised access, use or loss. You have the right to request access to your medical record and personal information.

If you haven't already received a Privacy - How Colac Area Health uses your Personal Information brochure, please ask your Nurse for a copy.

Interpreter Service

If the assistance of an interpreter is required, this will be arranged for you.

Open Disclosure

Open disclosure between clinicians and consumers is actively promoted when things do not go to plan.

Every patient has the right to be treated with care, consideration and dignity. At Colac Area Health we respect this right, and we are committed to improving the safety and quality of the care we deliver.

That is why we have a policy of open disclosure for when things do not go as planned with the care we provide.

Rights and Responsibilities

Your rights and responsibilities are detailed in The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights in Victoria brochure. *A summary of the charter can be found on your bedside locker.*

If your family or carer has concerns about your medical condition whilst you are in hospital please ask your nurse for a copy of the clinical escalation brochure.

Patients and visitors are not permitted to take illicit drugs in our organisation, vehicles, on our grounds and external areas. This is an illegal activity and if it occurs will be reported to the police immediately and persons involved will be discharged from the organisation.

Alcohol may only be consumed if authorised by your treating Doctor.

Bedside Clinical Handover

Colac Area Health conducts information handover between nursing shifts at the bedside for the morning-to-afternoon shift change. This is called the 'bedside clinical handover'. Research has shown this handover process decreases errors, supports discharge planning and increases patient involvement in their return to health. For maximum effect this handover requires input from the patient or carer. You will be orientated regarding your involvement in this handover process during your stay. Please make yourself available at 1.30 pm for the bedside clinical handover.

Discharge Planning

Planning for your discharge will commence during the admission process. Your nurse will discuss your approximate length of stay to ensure transport arrangements and family support is available upon discharge.

Your medical and discharge needs maybe discussed by a range of health professionals during your admission. This will enable you to have other services organised to support your safe discharge. Please advise your Nurse if you do not consent to this. Our aim is for you to go home as soon as your Doctor has authorised your discharge. Patients are encouraged to contact their own doctor or the health service at any time following discharge should advice or assistance be required.

Discharge at own risk

Every patient has the right to leave the hospital when he or she chooses. However, this decision may be harmful when taken against the advice of your doctor. You are urged to discuss the implications of this with your doctor or nursing staff.

If you decide to discharge yourself against the advice of your doctor, you will be asked to sign a form absolving the hospital of any responsibility for your actions.

Equipment Hire

If you require equipment to ensure safe discharge home, Colac Area Health will cover the cost of hire for the first 30 days.

The Equipment is provided by a company named Aidacare Healthcare Equipment. After 21 days you will be contacted by Aidacare to make arrangements for collection of the equipment. Should you still require the equipment after the 30 day period, Aidacare will make these arrangements with you at your own cost.

Infection Prevention

There are six simple ways to help prevent infection:

1. Wash your hands using soap and water or alcohol rub for at least 15 seconds. Hand hygiene is the best protection against infection
2. Your healthcare worker should always perform hand hygiene, please feel free to remind them to clean their hands
3. Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze as the majority of diseases are spread through sneezes and coughs. Dispose of tissues immediately and wash your hands
4. If your visitors are unwell please encourage them to stay at home
5. It is important to be vaccinated to provide protection against infectious diseases. Ask your doctor to check your vaccination status
6. Antibiotics are drugs used to treat bacterial infections, they have no effect on viral infections. Always take exactly as your healthcare provider instructs. Bacteria can become resistant to antibiotics if not taken as prescribed. This can lead to antibiotics resistant infections which can be harder to treat.

Your nurse can provide you with the following brochures

- I deserve clean hands

Volunteers

Our volunteers make a highly valued contribution to the hospital. If you would like to join our well-established volunteer program, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator on 5232 5100.

Students

As a teaching health service Colac Area Health employs medical, nursing and allied health students on placement. All students will identify themselves prior to the delivery of care.

Donations and Bequests

The Colac Area Health Foundation (the Foundation) fosters strong philanthropic links between the community and Colac Area Health, establishing lasting relationships with individuals, organisations and community groups, creating better awareness of our health service. The Foundation is the vehicle through which our community can contribute to further develop Colac Area Health's commitment to provide the community with an integrated health care service of excellence.

Please contact the Executive Officer on 5232 5100 for more information relating to the Foundation.

Victorian Public Hospitals – Information for Patients

The Medicare Agreement between the Commonwealth and State governments requires that **YOU** (or your agent) **elect** to be treated as a **public** (non-chargeable) or **private** (chargeable) patient upon admission to this hospital. Hospital employees cannot direct you towards making a particular decision. Your election status (public or private) is valid from the commencement of your admission (admission date) through to the end of the admission.

You (or your agent), having made an **informed** election to be treated as a **public** or **private** patient upon admission to this hospital, cannot change your initial election status except in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Examples of unforeseen circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Patients who are admitted for a particular procedure but are found to have complications requiring additional procedures
- Patients whose length of stay has been extended beyond those originally and reasonably planned by an appropriate health care professional
- Patients whose social circumstances change while in hospital (for example loss of employment).

Inadequate private health insurance cover is not a sufficient reason for changing your election status. Please ensure you check your level of cover before electing to be a private patient.

In situations where a change is made to election status because of unforeseen circumstances, the change in patient status is effective from the date of the change onwards, and is not retrospectively backdated to the date of admission.

A Public Patient

- Must be eligible to receive treatment under Medicare
- Will be treated by hospital doctors under the guidance of a supervising GP
- Cannot choose a specific doctor to provide his/her medical treatment
- Will not be charged for medical or hospital services.

You **cannot** choose to be a **public patient** if you:

- Elect to be treated by a doctor of your own choice
- Elect to occupy a bed in a single room
- Are not eligible to receive treatment under Medicare

Note that single rooms are not available in all Victorian public hospitals. Where present, these are allocated first to patients with specific medical or clinical need for single room accommodation. Private patients desiring a single room will be allocated this accommodation only if the single room is not medically required for other patients.

A Private Patient

If you elect to be admitted as a Private (Insured) Patient, all excess/medical gap expenses will be covered whilst an inpatient. We do not guarantee reimbursement where the patient is found to have had pre-existing conditions outside the guidelines of their health funds. A debt with Colac Area Health could be incurred for a pre-existing condition. Please check with your health fund.

The benefits of being a private patient are:

- If you have an excess applicable to your health fund, we will waive this fee each admission to Colac Area Health
- You will be able to choose your own doctor/specialist from the Visiting Medical Staff at Colac Area Health
- Where available you will have a private room
- You will receive a “pamper pack” of selected toiletries
- You will receive a complimentary newspaper each day
- You will be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses incurred from accounts you receive from doctors, pathology, radiology etc.

Information for Ineligible Patients

Patients without Medicare cover, Private Health Insurance, WorkCover, DVA or TAC cover will need to discuss payment options with Colac Area Health prior to the commencement of treatment.

If you have any queries or need assistance in relation to this process, please do not hesitate to contact, our Accounts Receivable Supervisor on 5232 5268 who will be happy to assist you.

Compensable Patients

If you are, or may be, entitled to, (or have already received) compensation, damages or other benefits in respect of the injury, illness or disease for which you are receiving hospital care and medical treatment, all fees and charges may be met by your compensation. This includes, for example compensation under the *Accident Compensation Act 1985 (Vic)*, *Transport Accident Act 1986 (vic)*, *Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 1983 (Vic)*, *Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (Cth)*, or a claim for damages at common law.

Veterans' Affairs Patients

Veterans' Affairs patients are those for whom the Department of Veterans' Affairs has agreed to accept responsibility for hospital charges for the condition for which you are being admitted.

Information for Private Patients

Colac Area Health is constantly seeking new ways to provide the best possible care for our community.

Electing to be admitted as a private patient will assist Colac Area Health in receiving additional revenue which will be used to:

- Improve and maintain existing accommodation and services
- Purchase new equipment
- Assist in recruiting and retaining specialist qualified staff
- Develop new initiatives for the community

If you elect to be admitted as a private patient:

- Some members of the Visiting Medical Staff are providing a No Gaps Billing Service to our private patients, however it is important that you confirm this with the Doctors Clinic as there may be exceptions.
- In the event of transfer to another hospital via ambulance you will need to make inquiries with your health fund to see if you are covered.
- If the patient is found to have had a "pre-existing" condition outside the guidelines of their health fund a debt with Colac Area Health could be incurred. Please check with your health fund.



Facilities and Services

Advanced Care Planning (ACP)

ACP is a process that empowers patients to prepare for future health by making informed decisions about medical treatment whilst they have capacity to do so. Having a say about your future medical treatment is called Advance Care Planning. It enables you to clarify your values and choices, and gives your family, doctors and nurses the opportunity to respect your choices.

If you have an Advance Care Directive (ACD), appointed Medical Treatment Decision Maker (MTDM) or Medical Enduring Power of Attorney (MEPOA) a copy must be provided for your medical records.

ACP process facilitates communication between patient's families and health professionals about values beliefs and life goals. If you would like more information about completing an ACP please ask your nurse or treating doctor.

Advocacy

Independent advice and information relating to the rights of people with a disability, their treatment and care can be obtained from the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) on 1300 309 337.

Please ask your nurse for a copy of the 'Advocacy brochure'.

Cafeteria

Visitors can purchase lunch from 12 noon to 1.45 pm (Mon-Fri) and 12.15 pm to 1.30 pm (Sat-Sun).

Free coffee/tea and hot chocolate is also available until 7.00 pm.



Public Toilets

Visitor toilets are located at the main entrance and outside the cafeteria.

Feedback

Colac Area Health values your feedback. Feedback includes compliments, suggestions for improvement and complaints. You can provide us with your feedback in several ways;

- Completing form within this booklet (page 18)
- Feedback boxes located in Acute, Community Reception and Urgent Care
- Online via our website: www.cah.vic.gov.au
- Community feedback brochures are available in each department

Complaints can be raised with any staff member, or the Clinical Governance Quality and Safety Unit upon request.

Should your complaint not be able to be resolved by Colac Area Health you are encouraged to contact the Health Services Commissioner on 1800 136 066.

You may also be contacted post discharge to participate in a survey about your experience with us. Please inform the caller at the time if you do not wish to participate.

Electrical Appliances

If you bring any electrical devices in to hospital (mobile phone, iPad, laptop chargers) they must be in good working order with no frays or exposed wires.

Meals

Meals are prepared by our qualified chefs and served by our trained food services staff. Please advise staff if you have any specific dietary requirements.

Smoke Free Environment

This is a smoke free Healthcare Service. Patients and visitors are not permitted to smoke in our buildings, vehicles, on our grounds and external areas as marked.

Please ask for a referral to the Smoking Clinic if you wish to manage your smoking whilst admitted. Brochures are also available upon request.

Staff Identification

It is your right to ask for identification from any person involved in your treatment and the functions he or she will perform in your care.

All hospital staff, and on-site contractors are required to wear an identification badge, which clearly states who they are.

Telephones

Telephones are located beside each bed and a public phone is available in the Hospital Reception foyer. To place a call from your bedside phone, lift the receiver and dial "0" then proceed with the number.

Family and friends can contact you by ringing the Acute Ward Reception on 5232 5128.

Valuables and Belongings

Colac Area Health will not accept responsibility for any cash or valuables belonging to patient's which have not been placed in safe security.

Visiting Hours/Rest Period

Visiting Hours are from:

<i>Acute patients</i>	11.00 am to 12.30 pm
	2.00 pm to 8.00 pm

Flexible visiting hours are available for patients in palliative care, for those who are cognitively impaired, for paediatric patients and at the discretion of the nurse in charge of the shift.

Entry in to the hospital after hours (9.00 pm – 6.30 am) is via Urgent Care.

If you wish to limit or restrict your visitors, please speak to your nurse who will arrange this for you.

WiFi

WiFi internet service is available for your use. Please ask the Ward Clerk for connection details.

Assistance Animals

If you require the support of an assistance animal, please discuss this with staff prior to your admission.

Your animal must meet appropriate standards. Staff will discuss this with you but you should be aware that if standards are not met CAH can refuse the access of your animal. The animal is to be trained to alleviate the effects of the disability and to meet standards of hygiene and behaviour.

CAH staff will not be responsible for engaging or caring for the animal in any way. If the patient is unable to retain control eg anaesthetic, there must be care arranged for the animal during this time.

The animal will be removed from the organisation if the patient is not in full control of the animal or a person is afraid or in fear of the animal.

Further Information

Colac Area Health is committed to providing our community with the best possible care.

Further information or brochures on the following topics can be provided. Please ask your nurse for more information.

- Open Disclosure
- Privacy/FOI
- Hand Hygiene Information
- Health Care Associated Infections
- Advance Care Planning
- Colac Area Health Foundation
- Preventing Pressure Injuries
- Advocacy

To ensure you are provided with information and are actively involved with your care or if you would like a copy of any of the brochures mentioned in this book please ask our staff for assistance.

Did someone go above and beyond?

If a staff member goes above and beyond your expectations you can honour them and say thank you by making a special donation to the Colac Area Health Foundation. The staff member will be informed of your appreciation.

Nomination forms are available at the nurses station. Please ask one of our ward clerks if you need further assistance.



Consumer Feedback Form

Colac Area Health welcomes your feedback regarding our services. Your feedback helps us improve the service we provide to our consumers and to know whether we have met your expectations.

This form can be used anonymously however if you would like to receive a reply please include your details.

Forms can be returned to the suggestion box, or alternatively return the form to:
Governance, Quality and Safety Unit
Colac Area Health
2-28 Connor Street
COLAC VIC 3250

Compliment

Complaint

Enquiry

Date: _____

Details: _____

Your suggestions for improvement: _____

Thank you

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

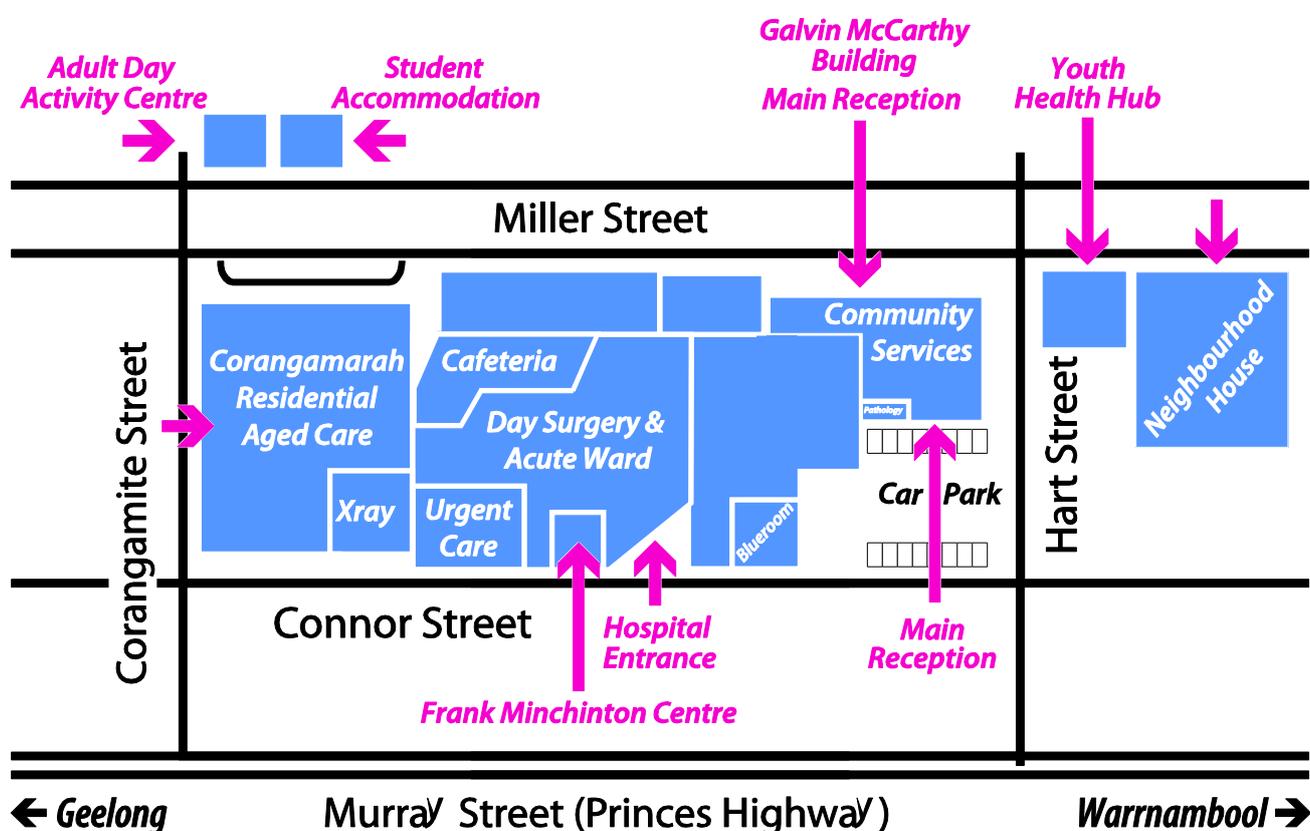
Email address: _____

Please indicate if you would like to receive a reply Yes No

Preferred method of reply Email Phone Letter

Colac Area Health takes all feedback seriously and confidentially, ensuring all matters are dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner.





Our Vision

Colac Area Health a trusted leader in complete community care. We listen to our consumers and strive to meet or exceed their expectations.

Our Mission

We will promote the health and wellbeing of the community by providing accessible integrated high quality services.

Work with us

Volunteer

Make a donation

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2-28 Connor Street, Colac, Victoria 3250 | 03 5232 5100 | www.colacareahealth.com.au

Quality Care Close to Home