

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.

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 and Freedom of 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.

Enduring Power of Attorney (Medical)

If you have an appointed Enduring Power of Attorney (Medical) a copy must be provided for your medical records.

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.



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 1pm 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 by 11.00 am once your Doctor has authorised your discharge. If it cannot be arranged for someone to take you home by this time, you may be discharged and asked to a seat in the waiting area.

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.

Infection Prevention

There are six simple ways to help prevent infection:

- Wash your hands using soap and water or alcohol rub for at least 15 seconds. Hand hygiene is the best protection against infection.
- Feel free to ask your doctor, nurse and other healthcare providers to clean their hands.
- 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.
- If your visitors are unwell please encourage them to stay at home.
- It is important to be vaccinated to provide protection against infectious diseases. Ask your doctor to check your vaccination status.
- Antibiotics have no effect on viral infections. If prescribed always take the entire course of antibiotics as bacteria can become resistant by not being killed completely.

Your nurse can provide you with the following brochures

- Respiratory Hygiene
- The ABC's of Antibiotics



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 Community Liaison 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 doctors nominated by the hospital
- 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

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 would like to speak to someone about preparing an Advance Care Plan, please speak to your nurse who will arrange a meeting with a Respecting Patient Choices Consultant.

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

The Cafeteria is staffed from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm daily. Visitors can purchase lunch from 12 noon to 1.45 pm (Mon-Fri) and 12.15 pm to 1.30 pm (Sat –Sun).



Vending machines for cold drinks and snacks as well as tea and coffee making facilities are located in the Cafeteria which can be accessed until 7.00 pm.

Public Toilets

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



Comments and Complaints

Patients and relatives are encouraged to provide comments, concerns and complaints about the care or service provided. Consumer Feedback Forms and a Suggestion Box is located in the hospital entrance.

Complaints can be raised with any staff member, or the Clinical Governance Quality and Safety Unit on 5232 5104. Feedback is also welcome via our website www.colacareahealth.com.au or using the form on the back page.

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.

Electrical Appliances

Patients may bring the following devices in to hospital mobile phones, iPod, e-readers, iPad, laptops and cameras however the charging of these devices must be done off site or using the hospital approved charging stations which can be obtained from the ward clerks.

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.

Meal times are as follows:

Breakfast	8.00 am
Morning Tea	10.00 am
Lunch	12.15 pm
Afternoon Tea	2.00 pm
Dinner	5.15 pm
Supper	7.00 pm



Parking

All day parking is available in the car park on the corner of Connor and Hart Streets. Disabled parking and short term parking is also available in this area, along with reserved parking for Haemodialysis patients. Please note that cars are parked at own risk in this car park.

Families of palliative care patients can contact the Volunteer Coordinator on 5232 5100 to assist with temporary parking permits.

Pastoral Care

Representatives from various denominations visit regularly. When booking in, you may be asked if you wish to be visited by clergy/church visitors and, if so, your name will be included on a list according to your nominated religion.

Photography/Social Networking

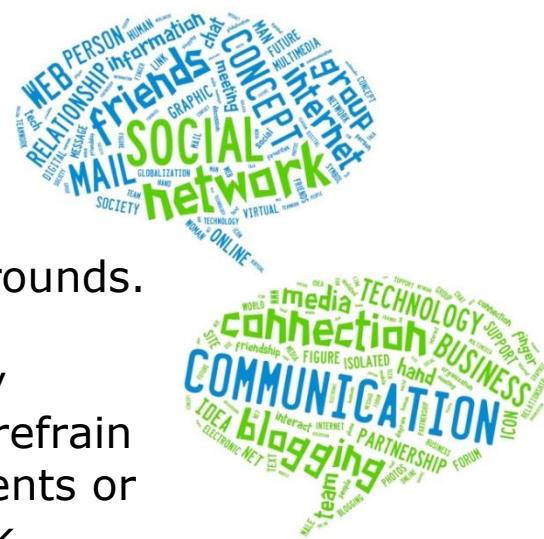
Photography using cameras and mobile devices is prohibited unless permission is granted by the Nurse Unit Manager.

No photos may be taken of any staff, surgical sites or hospital equipment or grounds.

To respect the privacy and confidentiality of all patients and staff, we request you refrain from making any reference to other patients or staff on any form of social media network.

Televisions

The television is provided in your room free of charge for your entertainment. If sharing a room, please respect the needs of other patients when using your television.



Refreshments

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

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 workmen 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:

Acute patients 11.00 am to 12.30 pm
 2.00 pm to 8.00 pm

Midwifery patients 2.00 pm to 8.00 pm only.

Bedside Clinical Handover is at 1.00 pm patients and/or carers are required to be present.

A rest period for **all patients** is between 12.30 pm and 2.00 pm. 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
- Respecting patient choices
- 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

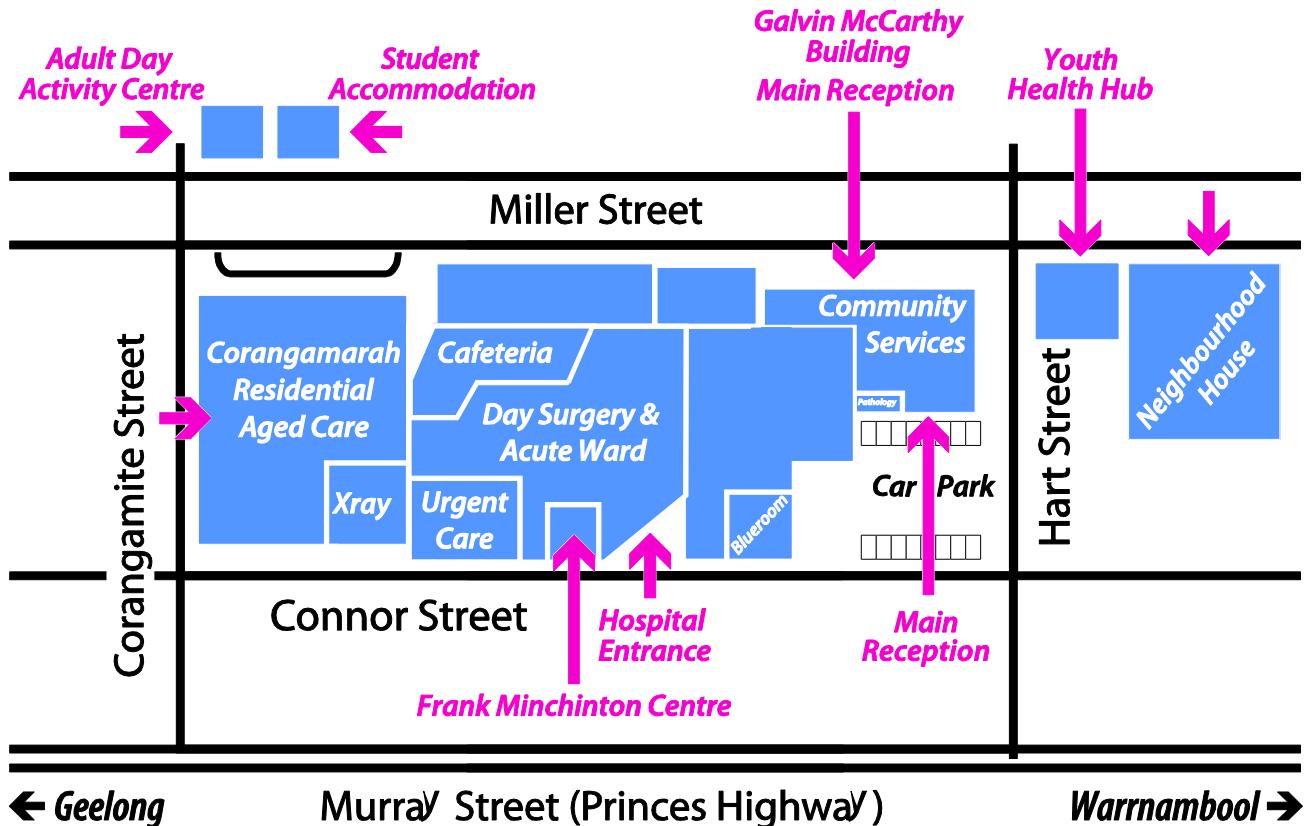
Email

Phone

Letter

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

X



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