

# Welcome to Northern Health

## Information for patients and families



**Northern Health**  
[www.nh.org.au](http://www.nh.org.au)

# Welcome Pack

## Information for patients and families

### Welcome to Northern Health

- This Welcome Pack provides key information regarding your hospital stay
- The Pack explains your rights as a patient, privacy and how you can provide feedback on the services you received
- A patient is a person receiving care, and also may be referred to as an: inpatient, consumer, resident, client and participant.

### Inside this pack you will find the following helpful information:

- Healthcare Rights and Responsibilities
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- REACH
- Preparing to leave hospital
- Visiting hours
- How to provide feedback
- Northern Health Patient Experience Surveys

### Northern Health welcomes your questions. Ask us:

**What is my main concern?**

**What do I need to do?**

**Why is it important for me to do this?**

#### You can ask questions when:

- You see a doctor, nurse or other health care provider
- You prepare for a medical test or procedure
- You receive medication

### Northern Health is a teaching and research organisation:

Northern Health has clinical students gaining essential experience through their placements with us. We may ask you to participate in their teaching, staff training and/or research activity. Your health care team will discuss this with you. Be comfortable in saying yes or no to having students help with your care.

### Further information:

For information regarding this pack or any of its contents, please speak to your treating team.

This information is general only.  
Northern Health encourages you to ask questions and get specific advice from your treating team.

**Northern Health**



If you need an Interpreter or the support of an Aboriginal Liaison Officer, please speak to a staff member.



[www.nh.org.au](http://www.nh.org.au)

# Rights

## Information for patients and families

### I have a right to:

#### Access

- Health care services and treatment that meets my needs

#### Safety

- Receive safe and high quality health care that meets national standards
- Be cared for in an environment that is safe and makes me feel safe

#### Respect

- Be treated as an individual, and with dignity and respect
- Have my culture, identity, beliefs and choices recognised and respected

#### Partnership

- Ask questions and be involved in open and honest communication
- Make decisions with my health care provider, to the extent that I choose and am able to
- Include the people that I want in planning and decision-making

#### Information

- Clear information about my condition, the possible benefits and risks of different tests and treatments, so I can give my informed consent
- Receive information about services, waiting times and costs
- Be given assistance, when I need it, to help me to understand and use health information
- Access my health information
- Be told if something has gone wrong during my health care, how it happened, how it may affect me and what is being done to make care safe

#### Privacy

- Have my personal privacy respected
- Have information about me and my health kept secure and confidential

#### Give feedback

- Provide feedback or make a complaint without it affecting the way that I am treated
- Have my concerns addressed in a transparent and timely way
- Share my experience and participate to improve the quality of care and health services



# Responsibilities

## Information for patients and families

### You have a responsibility to:

#### Participate

- Actively participate, to the extent you can, in your treatment; for example, by following your agreed treatment plan, asking questions about your care and raising any concerns you might have

#### Inform

- Provide as much information as you can about your medical history and current condition, to assist the staff caring for you; including any changes to your health condition

#### Communicate

- Attend appointments made for your ongoing care or advise staff in advance if you are unable to attend
- Let staff know if you do not understand anything, need more information or feel unable, at any time and for whatever reason, to assist staff with your care

#### Respect

- Treat staff and other patients with consideration and respect
- Ask your visitors to do the same
- Understand that, while we want to meet your needs promptly, the health service is also trying to meet the individual needs of many other patients at any one time. We must attend to people with the highest needs first
- Ensure that, in exercising your rights, you do not restrict or interfere with the rights of others
- Ensure that your actions do not threaten or harm other patients, staff or visitors





# Privacy and Confidentiality

## Information for patients and families

### Key points

- This information sheet outlines the way your information is managed by Northern Health
- We are committed to protecting the confidentiality of your information
- The privacy of your information is protected by law.

### What information is collected and why?

- Information is collected during your visit to Northern Health to provide you with the best care
- Examples of the information collected includes; your name, address, gender, past medical history, your general practitioner etc.
- It is important that you inform us at any point if your information changes.

### How is my information used?

- The information we hold about you will primarily be used by all staff who are involved in providing your health care and treatment.
- Once you have been discharged from the service, Northern Health will send information, or a letter which summarises your stay, to your general practitioner to ensure that you receive any required follow up care/treatment.
- Your information may also be used to monitor and assess the service we provide to our patients and within internal audits. In cases when patient information is used for quality improvement, all identifiable information will be removed. Any research projects which seek to use patient information must be processed through the Northern Health Human Research Ethics Committee.
- Northern Health is uploading patient information (if applicable) to your My Health Record via an implied consent model. Patient information will be uploaded unless Northern Health is advised otherwise.
- If you do not wish for Northern Health to upload into your My Health Record, please inform your health carer(s) during your admission. Alternatively, you can manage your information on My Health Record via [www.myhealthrecord.gov.au](http://www.myhealthrecord.gov.au)

### Do you share my information?

- Northern Health will share your information to other health professionals or health services in order for you to receive any required medical care/treatment.
- There are some instances when we receive a request for your information and before releasing, we will seek your authority first.
- Northern Health is mandated by law to report and provide data of particular diagnoses to external agencies.

# Privacy and Confidentiality

## Information for patients and families

### How can I access my information?

- Release of Information: If you require your information from Northern Health to be sent to another health care provider for follow up care, another opinion, or to assist with your care/treatment – Northern Health can send your information upon your direction and with your consent.
- Freedom of Information (FOI): Patients can also request a copy of their Medical Record from Northern Health under the Freedom of Information Act.
- If you feel your information is inaccurate, incomplete or out of date, you are able to request a review/amendment under the FOI Act.

### Is my information safe?

- All Northern Health staff are bound by Privacy Legislation and the Northern Health Privacy Policy.
- The primary reason Northern Health collects information is to provide a service to patients.
- All computers have security measures including password protection and audit trails. The Information Technology department have a number of measures to ensure all information within the network is secure.
- If you have any concerns around your information or the way in which Northern Health manages your information, please place all concerns in writing and address to the Northern Health Privacy Officer | 185 Cooper St, Epping VIC 3076, or send an email to [NHS-Privacy@nh.org.au](mailto:NHS-Privacy@nh.org.au)

### Further information:

- Please discuss with the team providing your care
- If you need your information sent to a health professional, please contact; Release of Information on T (03) 8405 8180 F (03) 8405 8007 E [roi@nh.org.au](mailto:roi@nh.org.au)
- If you would like a copy of your Medical Record/information please contact; Northern Health website [www.nh.org.au](http://www.nh.org.au) and search “Freedom of Information” OR, Freedom of Information on T (03) 8405 8258 E [foi@nh.org.au](mailto:foi@nh.org.au)

# Visiting Hours

## Information for patients and families

### Visiting Hours

Northern Health understands the importance of visitors to our patients. The safety and wellbeing of patients, staff and our community is always a priority.

Northern Health's standard visiting hours are:

- 8 am to 8 pm
- Maternity: 2 pm to 8 pm

There is a range of visiting hours across our health service, and this may vary or change depending on the:

- Requirements of a patient
- Health of visitors
- Type of ward a patient is on, or care they are receiving
- Events occurring more broadly, such as emergencies or infectious disease prevention

Any changes to Visiting Hours will be communicated widely to patients and visitors, throughout the hospital and on the website.

To find out the latest visiting hours across Northern Health's campuses, visit [www.nh.org.au](http://www.nh.org.au) or scan the below QR code. You can also check with the Nurse in Charge to find out the specific visiting hours for the ward you are staying on.



# Visiting Hours

## Information for patients and families

### Considerations

Family and friends are important to the patient's health, comfort, recovery and rehabilitation. Northern Health therefore supports patients to have family and friends visit based on the patient's clinical condition and personal preferences.

At the same time as encouraging family and friend's involvement, Northern Health needs to provide a safe physical environment for all patients, families and staff.

There may be circumstances that the ward/staff ask visitors to leave during certain periods, i.e. during a clinical incident or emergency situation.

Visiting children supervised by an adult are welcomed during the day. Children must be monitored at all times by the responsible adult to ensure a safe and restful environment for all patients.

Visitors with a potentially infectious disease (i.e. flu-like symptoms or gastro) should not visit.

### Visitors Behaviour

Disruptive and/or unsafe visitor behaviour is not tolerated and will be addressed directly and promptly.



# REACH out to us

Information for patients and families

## Are you worried

you or your loved one is getting sicker?

If yes... REACH out.

### STEP 1

Speak to your nurse. Tell them your concerns.

### STEP 2

If you're still worried, ask your nurse for a 'clinical review'. This should occur within 30 minutes.

### STEP 3

If a doctor has seen you or your loved one and you're still worried, call **REACH** on **1800 897 216**

## MAKING THE REACH CALL

*Tell the operator:*

- **Who you are** – a patient, family member or carer, or tell them the name of the patient
- That you **need to call REACH**
- The **name of the ward**
- The **bed number** you, or the person you care for, is in

# Medical Emergencies

## Information for patients and families

### When to call REACH

- If you have taken Steps 1 and 2 and are still worried about your (or your family member's) physical or mental health, move to Step 3 and call REACH (on previous page).
- When you call REACH, the Medical Emergency Team will come to see you.

### Medical Emergency Calls

While you are a patient, we monitor and record your progress by taking your observations such as pulse, blood pressure, oxygen and temperature, also called vital signs. Changes in your vital signs alert us that you might becoming sicker. We also monitor you for changes in your mental health.

### Changes in your vital signs or mental health state may mean that either:

- Your nurse will call your medical team to review you within 30 minutes.
- An automatic Medical Emergency Response will call the Medical Emergency Team for an urgent review within five minutes.

### What is a Medical Emergency Team?

The Medical Emergency Team is made up of specialist nurses and doctors trained to respond.

### How will I know that a Medical Emergency Team response has been called?

- Your nurse will explain what is about to happen. Six or more people may appear at your bedside to review your health.
- A doctor or specialist will be able to answer any questions you or your family have after your review.

### What happens after a Medical Emergency Call?

- Any changes to your current treatment will be explained to you, including any additional tests you may need.
- Your vital signs may be checked more frequently.

Most of the time you will stay on the same ward, however, sometimes you will be transferred to another area in the hospital. This will be discussed with you and your family.

### Further information:

If you have any questions, please ask your treating team.

# Preparing to leave hospital

## Information for patients and families

### Key points

- Patients (and their family members) need to be involved in planning to leave hospital
- Northern Health wants you to return to the comfort of your home, quickly and safely
- Depending on your condition, discharge planning may start soon after you arrive in hospital

### What is discharge planning?

Every patient will have a Discharge Plan. During your stay, Northern Health staff will work with you and your family to ensure you have a safe and comfortable transfer from the hospital back to your home. Your Discharge Plan explains what you need to do when you go home, for example, with medications, services and further appointments.

### During your hospital stay

To help you plan for your discharge, here are some things you and your family will need to consider before you go home:

- Have someone stay with you for the first 24 hours
- Stock up on easy to prepare foods
- Know who to call in an emergency
- Plan how you'll get to your next doctor's appointment (within a week of going home)
- Don't hesitate to seek assistance. There are many community services to assist you.

### Your discharge from Northern Health

When it is time to go home, we will give you enough notice so that you can arrange for transportation.

- Discharge can occur as early as 8.30 am - ask your nurse what time you will be discharged
- Ensure that someone can pick you up when you are ready to go home
- Our nursing staff will help prepare you for discharge and answer your questions.

### Final checks

Check all your belongings are collected and packed – it is a good idea to check around the bed and make sure you have all your personal items.

# Preparing to leave hospital

## Information for patients and families

**You will be provided with the following prior to discharge:**

- Patient/Carer Discharge Plan.
- Medical Discharge Summary. Your GP or usual doctor will receive a copy of this too.

### **At home medication safety**

Before you leave hospital, you will receive information about new medications you need to take at home and what medication you may need to stop taking.

### **Transit Lounge**

You may be transferred to the Transit Lounge while awaiting transport or discharge medications from Pharmacy.

### **Patient transfer to other Northern Health campuses**

Northern Health consists of different sites. To help with your recovery, we may speak with you about transferring your care to another Northern Health site.

**Bundoora Centre** - 1231 Plenty Road, Bundoora, VIC 3083 T (03) 9495 3100

This site provides inpatient and aged care rehabilitation, Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) and community services.

**Broadmeadows Hospital** – 35 Johnstone Street, Jacana VIC 3047 T (03) 8345 5000

Broadmeadows Hospital provides inpatient services such as medical, surgical, rehabilitation and Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM).

**The Kilmore & District Hospital** – Anderson Road, Kilmore VIC 3764 T (03) 5734 2000

The Kilmore & District Hospital provides 10 Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) beds for aged care rehabilitation.

### **Further information:**

Please speak to the nurse or doctor looking after you if you have any questions regarding discharge from hospital.

# How to provide feedback

## Information for patients and families

### Key points

- Northern Health welcomes your feedback.
- The very first step is always to talk to someone about your concern.
- Fill out our 'Talk with us' feedback form – your feedback helps us improve our service.

### Providing feedback

Northern Health aims to provide the best possible care. We need your help to keep improving our care and provide a positive patient experience.

We would like to hear about your experience so we can understand what we did well or what we could have done better.

Your feedback could be a compliment, a complaint or a suggestion.

### Talk to us in person

We would like to know if you are unhappy with your care so please don't wait until after you leave to raise your concerns. Let us know how we can improve your experience.

It is best to talk to us as soon as possible

- Start by speaking to the staff member or clinician looking after you or ask to speak to the Manager or Nurse in Charge
- If you have tried speaking to our staff and not been able to resolve your concerns, then you can contact the Patient Experience Office
- If you prefer, you can complete a Feedback Form and put in the box on your ward

### Further information:

Patient Experience Office: T (03) 8405 2457

Email: [feedback@nh.org.au](mailto:feedback@nh.org.au)

Online: [www.nh.org.au/patient-information/your-feedback](http://www.nh.org.au/patient-information/your-feedback)

Mail: Patient Experience Office, 185 Cooper Street, Epping VIC 3076

# Patient Experience Surveys

## Information for patients and families

### Key points

- The Northern Health Patient Experience Survey helps us understand the quality of care you received while attending our services
- The survey asks three to five questions on your recent experience at Northern Health
- Survey responses are discussed at team meetings and help us see what we are doing well and what we need to improve.

### Northern Health Patient Experience Survey

Northern Health would like to provide you with the opportunity to provide feedback on your recent stay. The survey has up to 5 short questions. Here are some examples:

- How would you rate the care provided by Northern Health?
- How often did health professionals explain things in a way that you could understand?
- How clean was the area of the hospital you were in?

The survey will take five minutes to complete and provides you with space for extra comment if you wish.

You can complete the survey via this QR code on your smart phone.  
Staff can assist you with a paper survey or ask about the iPad.  
Please ask if you need help.



### Victorian Healthcare Experience Survey

This survey looks at how Victorian hospitals compare when providing care to patients. The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services randomly selects participants to complete this survey. The survey may be sent to your home in the months after you are discharged. We welcome your feedback and encourage you to complete the questions so that your experience can be included in the data for all Victorian hospitals.

### Further information:

Ask a staff member to assist you and let them know you would like to complete the Northern Health Patient Experience Survey.