

PREPARING FOR --- DISCHARGE



'Your Care in Mind'



WELCOME

Whether you are someone living with a mental health condition or are caring for someone in their recovery, reaching out for support is an act of strength and courage that should be commended.

This booklet has been designed to support individuals with mental health conditions, their families and support networks throughout their recovery journeys after being discharged from Delmont Private Hospital.

You will find plenty of information about mental health, practical strategies in managing your daily routine and recovery. This includes reflective exercises, relapse prevention information, supports available for carers, and tips for talking about mental health.

On behalf of our team here at Delmont, we wish you all the best in your mental health recovery.

CONTENTS

Welcome	3
Discharging from Delmont: Checklist	4
Keeping well	5
Routine & structure	5
Outpatient care	6
Self-reflective practices	8
Social events and celebrations	10
Traffic light system to relapse prevention	11
Talking about mental health	12
Understanding mental health conditions	14
Myth Busting	16
Caring for someone with a mental health condition	17
Frequently asked questions	19

DISCHARGING FROM DELMONT: CHECKLIST

Medication (if applicable)

- ☐ I have discussed my medication with my doctor.
- ☐ I understand any side effects that I may experience with my medication.
- ☐ I understand the correct dosage and requirements of my prescribed medication.

Mental health condition

- ☐ I have discussed my mental health condition and/or diagnosis with my treatment team.
- ☐ I understand what my mental health condition is and how it may affect aspects of my day-to-day life.
- ☐ I understand what I can do to help myself throughout my recovery.
- ☐ I have discussed my mental health condition with my support person (e.g. partner, sibling, parent, friend).
- ☐ I understand how to recognise early signs that I may be relapsing and need some extra support in my recovery.

Outpatient care

- ☐ I have discussed how and when I will be discharged from Delmont with my treatment team.
- ☐ I have asked my doctor any questions I may have about my outpatient treatment.
- ☐ I have arranged any follow-up care I may need upon discharge (e.g. Delmont Day Program, Delmont Community Outreach Service, outpatient appointments).
- ☐ I have arranged with my doctor any medical certificates or letters that I may need.

Emergency

- ☐ I am aware of who to contact if I become unwell or experience an emergency and require urgent attention (i.e. Emergency Services: 000, or Life Line: 13 11 14).

KEEPING WELL

Many individuals with mental health conditions lead meaningful, happy and healthy lives regardless of their diagnosis. Whilst the process of recovering and learning to live with your condition can be a challenging, with the right skill set of healthy coping mechanisms, routine and structure, and support from those around you, it is entirely possible.

It is important to remember that even though your mental health condition may be a part of your life for a long time, it does not define who you are as a person.

Speak, even if your voice shakes

You are the expert of your own mental health and wellbeing, your treatment, and your recovery. If you feel or identify any concerns about your mental health and recovery, such as your symptoms, medication, treatment, or safety, reach out to your treatment team for support. Whilst asking for help may be challenging or emotional experience, it is the first step involved in taking charge of your own personal recovery.

ROUTINE & STRUCTURE

One great way to feel in charge of your mental health and wellbeing is to structure a balance of self-care, recreational, and productive activities into your daily routine. During your admission to Delmont, our clinical team supported you in keeping to a routine of regular meals, attending structured activities during the day, meeting with your doctor, and going to sleep at night. We strongly encourage you to continue maintaining this routine at home so you can continue to maintain your recovery. Aim to include a balance of the following activities each day:

Self-care	Productivity	Leisure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Go to sleep and wake up around the same time each day▪ Have a shower▪ Get dressed▪ Eat healthy meals▪ Brush your teeth and hair▪ Take any medication as prescribed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Schedule and attend any appointments as needed▪ Make your bed▪ Tidy a room in your house▪ Journal▪ Attend to your work or study commitments▪ Grocery shopping▪ Volunteer▪ Prepare a meal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Read a book, newspaper or magazine▪ Go for a walk▪ Phone a friend▪ Attend a social event▪ Start your own veggie garden▪ Sit in the park▪ Attend an exercise class in-person or online (e.g. yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates, swimming)

OUTPATIENT CARE

Here at Delmont Private Hospital, we value the importance of supporting individuals and their families to transition to living at home after being discharged from hospital. We provide many different outpatient services to suit the various mental health conditions, needs, and lifestyles of individuals whilst living within their communities.

These services are evidence-based and include Delmont Day Program (DDP), Community Outreach Service (COS), and the Transition to Home program (TTH). Our experienced clinicians work alongside patients over a period of weeks or months to support their individual needs and goals for therapy. This also means our clinicians may be able to identify if patients are at risk of relapse and in need of extra support for their mental health. If you are interested in attending our outpatient programs, please discuss it with your treating psychiatrist, therapy team, or nursing staff.

What are the benefits of outpatient supports and services?

- ✓ Ongoing outpatient care and support from our specialist mental health clinicians within the community
- ✓ Sense of **structure** and **routine** obtained from regularly attending the DDP on a weekly or fortnightly basis
- ✓ Opportunities to continue deepening your knowledge of mental health and **insight** into your condition
- ✓ Continue developing **healthy coping mechanisms** to maintain your recovery
- ✓ Patients attending our DDP often benefit from the group therapy session format and opportunities for **peer support** with other group members living with similar mental health conditions
- ✓ Regular **check-ins** with a mental health practitioner

Outpatient appointments

It is also important to attend regular outpatient appointments with your treating doctors and other clinicians involved in your care after you have been discharged from hospital.

There are many health professionals and community-based support services available for those living with mental health conditions. You may be interested in talking to your doctor about being referred to health professionals such as a clinical psychologist, social worker, family therapist, dietitian, or counsellor.

Tips for outpatient appointments

- ✓ Organise any outpatient appointments you may need to attend upon discharge, for example with your psychiatrist, psychologist, or general practitioner
- ✓ Keep track of your appointments by setting reminders in your mobile phone, keeping a diary, writing them on post-it notes to stick on your fridge, or using a whiteboard
- ✓ Plan ahead about how you will be getting to your appointments and whether this involves:
 - Driving yourself to your appointment
 - Asking a family member or friend to drive you
 - Calling a taxi
 - Using public transport
- ✓ It may help to write and take a few notes about what you would like to talk about at your appointment or any questions you wish to ask such as:

What are my treatment options?

What are the costs involved?

What do you recommend?

What are the potential side effects of my treatment?

Can I bring a family member or friend for support?



SELF-REFLECTIVE PRACTICES

The practice of reflecting upon thoughts, feelings, emotions and experiences may offer a wealth of benefit when recovering from a mental health condition. It may help to reflect upon your admission to Delmont, the progress you have made throughout your treatment, and your goals for recovery upon discharge. You may also find it helpful to share your reflections with your partner, family, and others around you.

What are the benefits of self-reflective practices?

- ✓ Opportunity to express yourself in an alternative and non-verbal manner.
- ✓ Supports you to process your thoughts, feelings and emotions.
- ✓ Allows you to process and make sense of your experiences.
- ✓ Opportunity to vent and release any unpleasant thoughts or emotions you may be holding onto.
- ✓ If you feel comfortable, you may show your self-reflections such as journal entries with your treating team or loved ones to help them to understand what you are going through.
- ✓ You may refer back to your previous self-reflections and see how you have changed over time.
- ✓ Develop your creative skills (e.g. improving your writing skills or drawing techniques).



PROMPTS FOR SELF-REFLECTIVE PRACTICES

How are you feeling about being discharged from hospital?

What are 3 activities that help you to feel calm?

What are 3 facts, skills, or strategies have you learned about during your admission?

What are 3 goals you would like to achieve this week?

What is an activity or hobby that you would like to try?

SOCIAL EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

Social events, holidays and celebrations often bring about a sense of excitement and joy, however can also be particularly challenging times for many people living with mental health conditions. To ensure that you are able to enjoy the celebration whilst still prioritising your mental health and wellbeing, you may find these tips helpful:

- ✓ Plan ahead for the day so that you know what to expect and when.
- ✓ Bring a bag to bring along with you on the day of the celebration. You may find it helpful to bring items such as:
 - Ear-phones to listen to a mindfulness track on your phone or device
 - Any prescribed medication you will need to take during the day
 - Fidget devices such as a fidget spinner or fidget cube
 - Scented moisturiser
 - Water bottle
 - A few of your favourite lollies
 - Muesli bar in case there is nothing suitable/available for you to eat
- ✓ Set aside some time for yourself during the day so that you can relax and rejuvenate. It may be helpful to communicate this to others, for example:

"I am looking forward to celebrating with you. To make sure that I am able to keep up with all of the excitement, I am planning on having a little break for half an hour this afternoon"

- ✓ Make sure that you remember to drink water throughout the day. Caffeine, soft drinks and alcohol can interact with certain medications and can easily lead to dehydration and cause irritability, headaches and fatigue.
- ✓ Try to ensure that you get enough sleep in the nights leading up to the event so that you have enough energy to keep up with all of the excitement of the celebrations

TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM TO RELAPSE PREVENTION

The signs and symptoms of mental health conditions are unique for each and every individual.

The traffic light system is a helpful way to consider your own personal experiences of having a mental health condition, identify the various signs that indicate your mental health state, and the signs you may be relapsing. You may like to share this worksheet with your loved ones so that they too are aware of what symptoms you may display when you are having difficulties coping, need some extra support, or are at risk of relapse.

GREEN Signs I am going well in my recovery: (E.g. attending appointments, eating regular meals, showering daily, coping with my triggers, taking prescribed medication as per required)	
Orange Signs I may be slipping back into relapse and need some extra support: (E.g. reduced attendance at work or school, social withdrawal, difficulty coping, increasing stress levels, increased smoking or alcohol consumption, self-harm urges)	
Red Signs I am experiencing a mental health relapse and require additional psychological support: (E.g. engaging in self-harm, suicidal ideations, social withdrawal, not taking prescribed medication as required, feeling unsafe)	

*If I am experiencing a mental health crisis and need help, this is who I can call:
000 (Police, ambulance, fire)*

My spouse / carer / friend / support person: _____

My treating doctor: _____

TALKING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Open and honest conversations about mental health are important regardless of whether or not you have a mental health condition. Whilst talking about mental health may feel challenging at times, it is one of the fundamental keys to healthy and positive relationships.

The following pages offer some practical strategies and resources designed to support you and your loved ones in talking about mental health.

Conversation starters

When you are not feeling like yourself, starting conversations with those around you can be tricky. It may be helpful to initiate conversations with some gentle and open topics, for example by sharing:

Highlight
of your
day

Something
that made
you smile

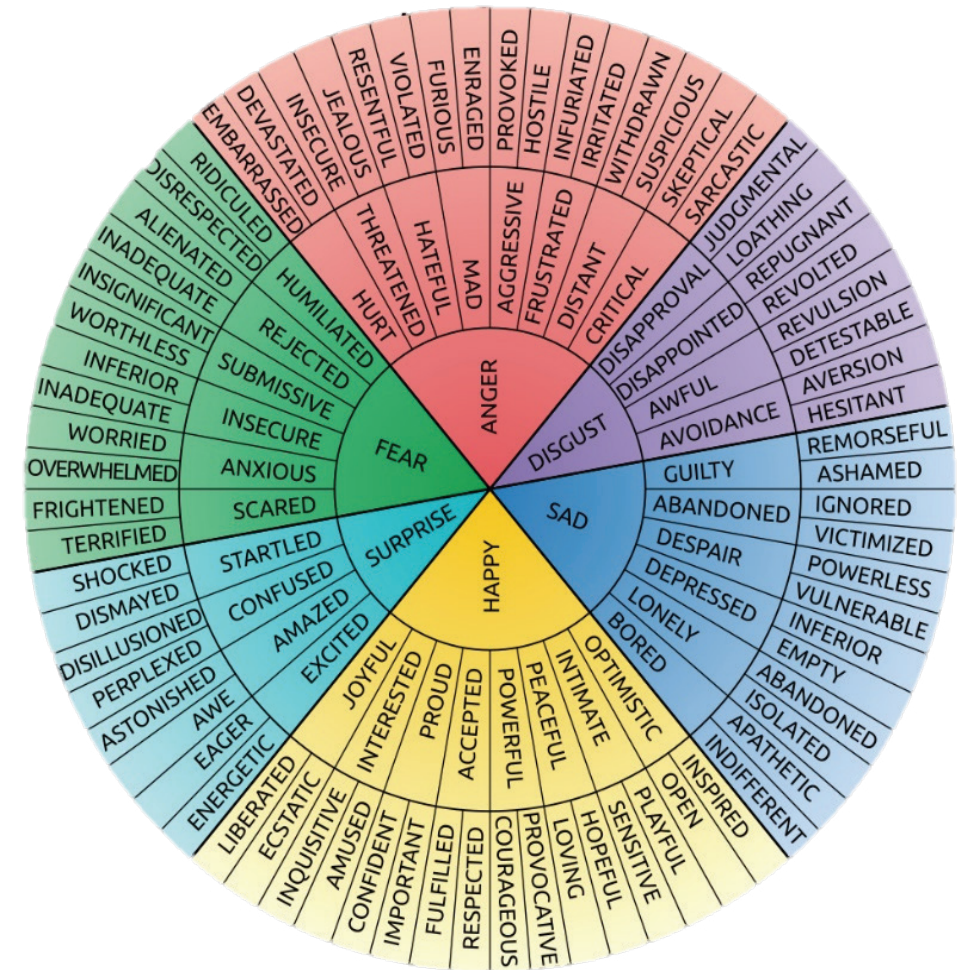
Something
that you
learned

One goal
for
tomorrow



WHEEL OF EMOTIONS

Many people with mental health conditions sometimes have difficulties in identifying and labelling the emotions they are feeling. This wheel of emotions may be useful in guiding you to reflect upon what emotions you may be feeling and express them to your loved ones.



UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

"A state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community."

- World Health Organization (2018) definition of mental health

Mental health conditions can and do affect people of all ages, genders, ethnicities, religions, socio-economic statuses, professions, and walks of life. In fact, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018), approximately 45% of Australian adults will experience a mental health condition throughout their lives. This means that 1 in 5 adults are living with a mental health condition at any given point. The signs and symptoms of mental health conditions are not always obvious to others, in fact, many people often appear to be healthy even though they are suffering inside. No one ever chooses to have a mental health condition, nor should they ever be made to feel that way by others.

Mental Health in Australia: Quick Facts

1 in 7 Australian adults experience depression at least once throughout their lives.

The most common mental health conditions include anxiety disorders, affective disorders, and substance-use disorders.

Mental health conditions can develop at any stage in life, however the typical onset occurs between 18-24 years.

It is common to have more than one mental health condition at the same time, for example experiencing both anxiety and depression.

The signs and symptoms of mental health conditions are not always obvious to others.

Mental health conditions are diagnosed according to the criteria set in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V).

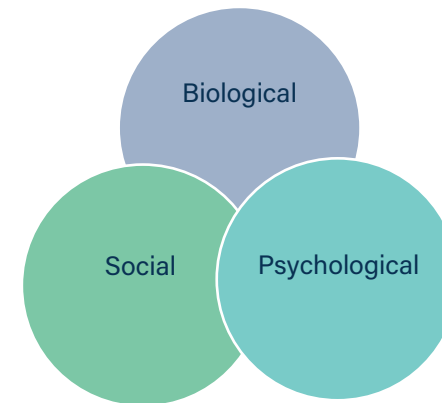
Mental health conditions can be serious, but there is help and support available.

What influences mental health and recovery?

"There's no simple answer as to why people develop anxiety or depression it's different for everyone, and there are lots of different factors in our lives that affect mental health."

- Beyond Blue, 2021

The experiences of living with and recovering from a mental health condition are unique for each and every individual. There are many different biological, social, psychological, and environmental factors that influence mental health. This diagram illustrates some of these factors.



Biological	Social	Psychological
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Genetic predispositionChemical and hormonal balances in the bodyAgeSmoking habitsAlcohol and substance-use behavioursMedicationGenderCo-morbiditiesTreatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Family and friendsTreatment teamAccess to mental healthcareEmployment statusWorld affairs and eventsLife experiencesBullyingIsolationHousingViolence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Coping strategiesInsight and awareness of mental healthDiagnosisStress levelsTraumaCo-morbiditiesTreatment

MYTH BUSTING

MYTH	BUSTED
<i>"My mental health condition is my fault."</i>	There are many different biological, social, and psychological factors that contribute to the development and recovery of mental health conditions. Many of these factors are beyond the control of individuals. No one ever chooses to have a mental health condition, nor should they ever be made to feel that way by others.
<i>"Mental health conditions are rare."</i>	Mental health conditions are far from being rare or uncommon within society. In fact, did you know that approximately 45% of Australian adults will experience a mental health condition at some stage throughout their lives? Furthermore, according to Beyond Blue, one in five adults will experience a mental health condition in any given year.
<i>"Talking about mental health conditions only makes it worse."</i>	Being open and talking about mental health conditions and feelings can be incredibly liberating and therapeutic for both individuals and their support networks. In fact, avoiding these discussions only reinforces the many misconceptions and stereotypes about mental health.
<i>"Mental health conditions are a sign of weakness."</i>	Individuals with mental health conditions are, in fact, often some of the strongest people of whom have had to ensure immense challenges throughout life.

CARING FOR SOMEONE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION

What is a carer?

"A carer is a person providing care to another person with care needs. A carer may look after a partner, family member, friend or someone else who needs support. Carers can be of any age, from any culture or country, and any socio-economic background. Carers may be employed or not employed. A carer might not live with the person for whom they care."

-Department of Health (2019)

Families, friends, and carers play a special and invaluable role in supporting individuals with mental health conditions throughout their recovery journeys. It is important for carers to look after their own wellbeing.

Carer wellbeing

When you are caring for someone with a mental health condition, it can be easy to overlook your personal health and wellbeing needs. One of the greatest things you can do to support your loved one is to continue tending to your individual needs, interests, and goals in your day-to-day life. By caring for yourself, you can better care for others.

Here are some activities you may find helpful to look after your health and wellbeing as a carer:

- Make an appointment with your doctor to check-up on your own health
- Attend an exercise class
- Spend some time outside reading a book, magazine or the newspaper
- Make time to catch up with a friend
- Treat yourself to coffee and cake from your local café
- Go for a walk and listen to music, a podcast, or an audio-book

In the space below, write down some of your favourite ways to relax.

How can I support my loved one in their recovery?

Validate your loved one's experiences

Living with and/or recovering from a mental health condition can be an incredibly isolating and overwhelming experience. Whilst you may not be able to fully understand what your loved one is going through, it is important to validate and acknowledge their experiences. You are not expected to offer any advice for your loved one, but rather just show that you recognise their difficulties and are accepting of their story.

"I may not understand what you are going through right now, and so I am here to listen to you when you need."

"I may not be able to offer you any advice or words of wisdom, but I am here for you to listen."

Use "I" statements, rather than "You" statements

When discussing your feelings or concerns with your loved one about their mental health condition, it is often helpful to use phrases such as:

"I am worried about you because...."

"I would like you to consider making an appointment with your doctor because...."

In doing so, you may be demonstrating that your care and concern for your loved one and their health. Try to limit your use of "You" phrases, such as "You never listen...." or "You should...." as these can be interpreted negatively.

Don't be afraid to ask questions.

Having open discussions and asking gentle questions about mental health with your loved one is often a positive and helpful experience that can reduce the stigma about mental health conditions. In doing so, you are showing support and acceptance for your loved one's mental health and wellbeing as well as validating their experiences. Try asking questions such as:

"That sounds like a really challenging time you went through. Can I ask what it was like for you?"

Support your loved one in re-engaging within their communities.

Re-engaging with the community, particularly after being discharged from hospital, may be a challenging or overwhelming experience for your loved one. You may like to show your support by offering to arrange an outing or social activity for the both of you, for example going to the cinema or out for a meal together.

"I remember you telling me that you like Italian food. Would you like to go out for dinner and share a pizza?"

Support your loved one in managing any outpatient appointments they may have upon discharge from hospital.

Being discharged from hospital and managing recovery in the community can be an overwhelming experience for many. To ease this transition, individuals are encouraged to attend regular appointments with their treating team or Delmont's outpatient programs. It may be helpful for you to support your loved one in organising their engagement and attendance with their treating team in the community.

Be mindful of any potential triggers that may cause your loved one discomfort or distress.

There may be particular locations, sensations (e.g. smells, sounds, tastes, sights), events, activities, or other people that may trigger unpleasant thoughts or memories for individuals living with mental health conditions. It may be helpful for you and your loved one to discuss these triggers where possible. When planning activities for you to participate in together, avoid suggesting places/activities that may be triggering for your loved one or expose them to potential harm or distress. Individuals recovering from alcohol or substance-use disorders may, for example, be triggered in environments such as bars and pubs.

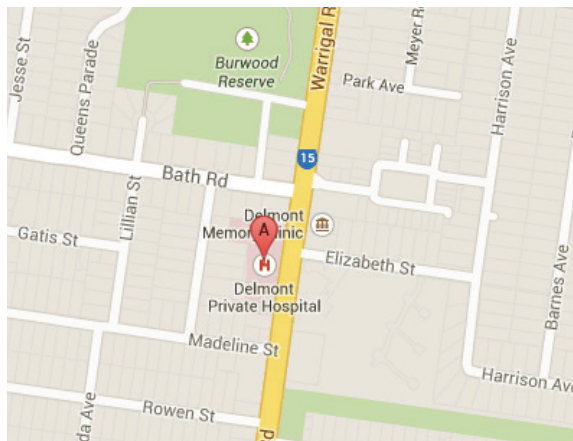
Remember that a mental health condition or diagnosis does not define a person's identity.

An individual's identity is comprised of many different things including their personality traits, values and morals, goals, hobbies, interests, and life experiences. Whilst a mental health condition may be a part of an individual's life, it does not, and nor will it ever, define who they truly are.

It is recommended that you avoid referring to an individual based on their diagnosis, for example by labeling them as "schizophrenic," "borderline" or "anorexic," as this only reinforces the identity of mental illness.

Instead, try to use language such as "a person who has a diagnosis of...." or "a person who is being treated for...."





300 Warrigal Road Glen Iris 3146
T: 03 9805 7333 F: 03 9808 8658
E: delmont@delmonthospital.com.au
www.delmonthospital.com.au

