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**BESTCARE**  
*@ Benalla*  
HEALTH

# Benalla Health Strategic Plan 2025 – 2028



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## Acknowledgement of country

Benalla Health acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and provide care, the Yorta Yorta People and the Taungurung People, and pays respect to their Elders past and present.

We recognise their enduring connection to Country, including the Broken River and the Goulburn River (Kaiela), and we honour the continuing histories, cultures and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our region.



# Our commitment to Benalla

Benalla Health is committed to delivering exceptional healthcare services to our community, ensuring that every individual has access to the highest quality of care. Our vision is to enhance health outcomes through a patient-centered approach, continuous innovation, and dedicated partnerships.

We pledge to foster an inclusive, supportive, and engaging workplace culture that empowers our staff and encourages professional growth. By investing in our people, we aim to build a skilled and motivated workforce that is prepared to meet the future challenges of the healthcare industry.

As the largest employer in the region, Benalla Health plays a critical role in providing workforce opportunities for the diverse residents of Benalla. We

are dedicated to supporting the local economy by offering employment and development opportunities that enable our community members to thrive professionally and personally.

Our commitment extends to the broader community, where we strive to strengthen our connections and collaborations with local organisations. Together, we will address the unique health needs of our region, promote wellness, and improve the overall health and wellbeing of our community members.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all those who have contributed to the development of this strategic plan. Your input and dedication are invaluable as we work towards a healthier future for Benalla.



# A Message From Our Leaders

Benalla Health is defined by strong communities, a unique local character, and a shared commitment to a healthier future close to home. Over the past year, we have listened carefully, to patients and carers, staff and volunteers, Traditional Owners, and partners across the Hume region, about what matters most and where our efforts should be focused.

Our Board and our organisation are committed to delivering on these priorities together. Thank you to everyone who contributed ideas and feedback to help shape this vision. We look forward to working with our community to bring it to life.

This Strategic Plan sets out clear priorities and actions for the next three years. Shaped through extensive engagement,

it balances the opportunities and challenges of regional healthcare. From delivering safe, person-centred care and growing a skilled local workforce to strengthening partnerships, modernising our digital foundations, and ensuring long-term sustainability, the plan aims to guide our work in a way that is transparent, practical, and ambitious.



**Jackie Kelly**  
*Chief Executive  
Benalla Health*



**Sarah Chaplin**  
*Board Chair  
Benalla Health*



# About Our Health Service



## Our Story

Benalla Health is your local hospital and health service. We have grown up alongside this community, welcoming new babies, supporting families through tough times, helping older residents stay well, and we are here for you every day with safe, person-centred care close to home. From urgent care and day procedures to inpatient services, home nursing, maternity, rehabilitation, allied health, community programs and residential aged care, our care extends well beyond our walls.

What makes us special is the spirit of Benalla, neighbours caring for neighbours. Our dedicated staff, volunteers and partners turn that spirit into action: listening, improving and working together so you don't have to travel for the care you need whenever it's safe to provide it locally.

## What Sets Us Apart

Our team knows you by name and works with partners across the region to keep care local whenever it's safe to do so. We meet people where they are, hospital, home, or community, while championing inclusion and cultural safety. And we never stop improving: we listen, learn, and act so every experience is kind, clear, and consistently high quality.



# Our Services



## We Provide Comprehensive Healthcare Including:

- 24/7 Urgent Care - here when you need us
- Planned surgery and day procedures - more care, closer to home
- Acute inpatient care - compassionate hospital care, close to home
- Women's health - supporting wellbeing across life stages
- Rehabilitation and chronic disease management services, recovery and living well, help to get you back on your feet
- Home Nursing Services - Hospital In The Home (HITH), Palliative Care
- Residential aged care - a homelike place to belong
- Health Independence Programs - Support at Home - independence with a helping hand
- Healthy community partnerships - tackling local priorities together

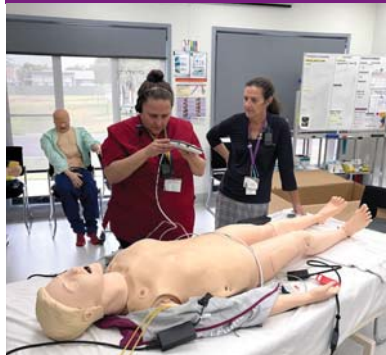
# Your Community Health Service

Proudly serving the Benalla region and surrounding communities

Skilled local team,  
supported by  
regional partners



Thousands of  
people cared for  
each year



24/7 Urgent Care,  
when you need it



## Our Role

Benalla Health is your local, integrated health service. On one campus we bring together urgent and hospital care, inpatient and day procedures, specialist clinics, allied health, rehabilitation and community programs, plus residential aged care, so most of the care you need can happen right here, near family and supports.

We look after the whole person. From a visit to urgent care, through a hospital stay, recovery and community follow-up, we focus on smooth transitions and joined up care across settings.

We are a community partner as much as a health service. We work closely

with local GPs, schools, councils, regional hospitals and community organisations to improve access, bring services closer to home, and respond to what matters most in Benalla.

We design with, not for, our community. Recent consultations and co-design workshops with residents, partners and staff continue to guide how we improve care, strengthen partnerships and plan for the future.

Above all, we are here to provide safe, person-centred, evidence-informed care, every person, every time.

# Our Mission and Values

## Our Vision

Healthy, thriving and resilient communities in and around Benalla

Our vision is for healthy, thriving and resilient communities in and around Benalla. Our mission is to provide equitable healthcare that meets the unique needs of our community, offering care and guidance through every step

## Our Mission

Benalla Health is committed to providing equitable healthcare services that meet the unique needs of our community, providing care and guidance through every step of their health journey.

of your health journey. We live our values every day, Respect, Empathy, Excellence, Compassion and Accountability, so your care is not only clinically safe and effective, but also kind, inclusive and responsive to individual needs.

## Core Values

### Accountability

We take responsibility, keep our promises, learn from mistakes, and follow procedures.

### Respect

We protect privacy, treat everyone fairly, value contributions, and respond promptly and courteously.

### Empathy

We take time to understand others, encourage them, and act with kindness.

### Compassion

We listen respectfully, accept without judgement, and respond to everyone's needs with care.

### Excellence

We strive for high standards, stay open to ideas, learn continuously, and improve together.



# How We Got Here

We built this plan with the community, our staff and partners, and with clear evidence. The process moved from understanding today, to agreeing where we need to be, to designing a practical plan with actions, measures and responsibilities. It blends data, lived experience and clinical expertise so the strategy is both ambitious and achievable.



## 1. Current State

A shared, evidence-based picture of how we are performing and what matters most to Benalla.



- Community survey
- Staff forums
- Service analysis
- Maturity review



## 2. Future State

Define where we want to be by 2028 and the principles that guide our choices.



- Co-design workshops
- Role delineation
- Options testing
- Pillars and outcomes



## 3. Design Strategic Plan

Translate direction into a clear plan with accountable actions and away to track progress.



- Action plans
- KPI dashboard
- Implementation road map
- Final validation



# Challenges and Opportunities

Caring for a community means being honest about what is hard and clear about how we will improve. Benalla Health is facing the same pressures many rural services feel, staffing, rising demand and older facilities, but we also see real opportunities to bring more care closer to home, make services easier to navigate, and involve you in every step. This page sets out the key challenges our community experiences and the practical actions we are taking together with our partners and consumers, to turn them into better care now and for the years ahead.

## Challenges

- **Getting and keeping staff:** Rural areas can find it harder to recruit; we are working to build stable, local teams.
- **More people needing care:** Our community is ageing and living with more complex health needs.
- **Travel for some services:** Not everything can be provided locally yet, which means time away from family.
- **Older buildings and equipment:** Some spaces limit how much care we can provide or how efficiently we work.
- **Paperwork and systems:** Too much manual work slows things down and makes sharing information harder.
- **Tight budgets:** Costs are rising; we must make every dollar count without compromising care.
- **Fair access for everyone:** We must keep improving cultural safety, accessibility and support for diverse needs.
- **Staff wellbeing:** Health care is demanding; we need to keep our people safe, supported and well.

## Opportunities

- **More care close to home:** Grow day procedures, endoscopy and rehabilitation so more treatment happens here.
- **Smoother care pathways:** Clearer referral and transfer arrangements with regional hospitals, less waiting, less worry.
- **Stronger local workforce:** “Grow-your-own” training, mentoring and career pathways for nurses, allied health and support staff.
- **Better use of technology:** Move to “paperlite,” introduce e-documentation and secure messaging to save time and prevent errors.
- **Aged care you can trust:** Dementia-aware environments, more allied health, and safer transitions between hospital and home.
- **Prevention and wellbeing:** Partner with council, schools and local groups on healthy living and youth wellbeing.
- **Greener operations:** Reduce waste and energy costs so more resources go to frontline care.
- **Your voice at the centre:** More co-design with consumers so services are easier to find, simpler to use and consistently kind.

# What We Will Focus On



**This plan is built around five pillars that turn community feedback and evidence into clear action. They describe what we will focus on, how we will work with partners, and the outcomes you can expect to see.**

Equity, cultural safety and inclusion run through everything we do. We will continue to partner with Aboriginal organisations, local GPs and community groups, and publish a simple community scorecard so you can see how we are tracking and where we are improving.



## Services

Kind, reliable care every time, with strong safety systems and consumer voices shaping improvements.



## Community

More services locally, smoother referrals and transfers, working with regional partners so care feels seamless.



## Organisational Sustainability

Stable, supported local teams with inclusive workplaces, career pathways, and wellbeing at the centre.



## People

Less paperwork, better information sharing, and data that helps us fix problems early and improve experiences.



## Infrastructure

Smarter spending, modern facilities and greener practices so resources go to frontline care.



# Pillar 1: Services

## Goals and Objectives

1.1

### Ensure Equitable Access to High Quality Healthcare Services

- Reduce financial barriers to achieve improved access to services.
- Improve physical accessibility to enhance service availability for all patients.

1.2

### Ensure Essential Healthcare Services Meet Community Needs

- Optimise and grow services to meet the evolving needs of the community.
- Enhance service availability to ensure comprehensive community care.
- Increase clinical staff in key service areas such as anaesthetics, surgery, and obstetrics in partnership with larger health services.
- Develop strong relationships with local practices and to improve recruitment and retention of GPs.

1.3

### Understand Community Healthcare Needs

- Conduct regular community health assessments to identify and address healthcare needs.
- Collaborate with local health organisations to develop joint programs and initiatives.

1.4

### Optimise and Expand Services to Provide Care Close to Home

- Expand the Hospital in the Home (HITH) program to increase service capacity.
- Increase services offered by the HITH program to enhance home based care.



## Pillar 2: Community

### Goals and Objectives

2.1

#### Enhance Overall Community Health

- Enhance service offerings for vulnerable and at-risk population groups to improve disparate health outcomes in the community.
- Expand access to mental health and social support services to address community needs.
- Become an advocate and facilitator for family violence services in the region.

2.2

#### Strengthen Engagement with Indigenous Communities

- Enhance healthcare access for Indigenous communities to improve health outcomes and strengthen community relationship.
- Foster cultural awareness and inclusivity to support Indigenous community engagement.

2.3

#### Foster Inclusivity and Support for Diverse Populations

- Enhance services/service understanding for CALD and LGBTIQ+ communities to ensure inclusivity.
- Improve accessibility for people with disabilities to provide equitable healthcare services.

2.4

#### Enhance Community Involvement and Trust

- Develop formal partnerships with key community organisations to strengthen collaborative opportunities.
- Strengthen community advisory committee involvement to increase community trust.
- Become an advocate and facilitator for family violence services in the region.



# Pillar 3:

## Organisational Sustainability

### Goals and Objectives

3.1

#### Identify Growth Opportunities and Optimise Financial Management

- Increase the service mix to maximise profitable activities.
- Optimise financial management practices to enhance resource efficiency.

3.2

#### Optimise the Use of Infrastructure and Assets

- Improve utilisation of existing facilities to maximise operational efficiency.
- Enhance infrastructure to support service expansion and growth.

3.3

#### Promote Environmental Sustainability and Reduce Waste

- Implement waste reduction and energy efficiency practices to promote sustainability.
- Position Benalla Health as a leader in environmental sustainability by proactively leveraging government grants and opportunities to implement green initiatives.

3.4

#### Develop Local Talent Networks and Grow Local Workforce

- Support educational capabilities and pathways for Registered Nurse training in Benalla by collaborating with educational institutions.
- Foster early interest in healthcare careers among local students by implementing programs in local schools.

3.5

#### Collaborate With Local Service Partners To Enhance Service Delivery

- Formalise regional agreements that support Benalla Health's service capabilities while enhancing collaboration with key partners.
- Formalise collaboration agreements with regional partners to streamline processes and enhance organisational capabilities.



# Pillar 4: People

## Goals and Objectives

4.1

### **Empower Staff and Create Pathways for Professional Development**

- Build skills and competencies of staff to enhance professional growth.
- Foster a culture of empowerment and engagement to improve organisational culture.

4.2

### **Facilitate Community Members' Entry into Benalla Health Workforce**

- Increase awareness of employment opportunities at Benalla Health to attract local talent.
- Develop programs to attract and support a diverse workforce to enhance inclusivity.

4.3

### **Foster a Supportive and Inclusive Work Environment for All People**

- Enhance diversity and inclusion initiatives to promote an inclusive culture.
- Promote work-life balance and wellbeing to improve staff morale and retention.

4.4

### **Ensure Staff Have Clear Roles and Responsibilities and Accountabilities**

- Define clear roles and responsibilities for all staff to improve job clarity and enable continuous improvement.
- Empower staff by helping them understand the impact of their roles on the community and patients.



# Pillar 5: Infrastructure

## Goals and Objectives

5.1

### Modernise Facilities and Equipment to Make It Fit-for-Purpose

- Upgrade key facilities to meet modern healthcare standards.
- Upgrade essential medical equipment to enhance service delivery.

5.2

### Optimise the Usage of Existing Spaces to Support Efficient Patient Care

- Conduct space utilisation assessments to identify and reallocate underused areas.
- Enhance the efficiency of patient flow and care delivery.

5.3

### Reduce Procurement Costs Through Strategic Partnerships

- Review and optimise the current collective procurement agreement to ensure cost-effectiveness.

5.4

### Improve Technology Infrastructure

- Enhance digital integration and interoperability to streamline operations and reduce administrative burden.
- Advocate for improved mobile, internet, freight, and passenger transport connectivity that enables business development and attracts new industries.

# Executing Our Plan



## Develop Detailed Action Plans

Develop comprehensive documentation for each action, outlining the specific steps, resources required, timelines, and expected outcomes.

Establish clear mile stones and deadlines for each action to track progress and ensure timely completion.



## Engage Stakeholders and Foster Collaboration

Involve community members and key stakeholders in the implementation process to ensure actions are aligned with their needs and expectations.

Strengthen partnerships with local organisations, government agencies, and other healthcare providers to leverage resources and expertise.



## Monitor and Evaluate Progress

Conduct regular progress reviews to assess the status of each action, identify any challenges, and make necessary adjustments.

Use the maturity assessment pillars and defined success metrics to measure the impact of implemented actions on organisational performance.



## Focus on Continuous Improvement

Continuously gather feedback from staff, patients, and stakeholders to identify areas for improvement and inform future actions.

Be flexible and willing to adapt the implementation approach based on feedback and changing circumstances, ensuring continuous improvement.

# Next Steps

**How you will hear from us:** updates on our website and socials, community newsletters, the Annual Report and Quality Account, and open forums where you can ask questions and share ideas.

**How to get involved:** join our consumer advisory activities, co-design sessions or feedback panels. Expressions of interest will be advertised regularly.

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# Acknowledgements

This plan was shaped with many voices. We thank our patients, carers and families who shared their experiences; our staff, volunteers and visiting clinicians for their dedication and ideas; and our consumer representatives for their thoughtful challenge and guidance. We acknowledge the leadership of our Board and the support of our Executive and managers throughout the process.

We also thank our regional partners, local General Practices, community organisations, neighbouring health services, ambulance and aged care

partners, schools and councils, for walking alongside us to keep care close to home.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we live and work, pay our respects to Elders past and present, and thank Aboriginal community leaders and organisations for their advice and partnership.

Finally, our gratitude to the Hospital Auxiliary, donors and community groups whose generosity strengthens services and patient experience at Benalla Health.

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