

Benalla HEALTH



Quality Account 2016/2017

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Our Vision

Supporting a healthy community

Our Mission

The purpose of Benalla Health is to facilitate a healthy and resilient community through the provision of integrated, lifelong healthcare services

Our Values

Respect
Empathy
Excellence
Compassion
Accountability

About the Quality Account

This year, the Quality of Care Report has been renamed the Quality Account. It provides our community with quality and safety data, as well as sharing the actions that have been taken to improve our service. All the data and stories included in this Report are from between July 1 2016 to June 30 2017.

Message from the Board Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer

At Benalla Health, we understand the unique privilege we have of being invited into your lives in times of need. You allow us to witness some of the memorable stages of life, from the very start to the very end.

We are constantly trying to improve our services so they are of the highest quality and ensure the safety of everyone involved. The 2016/2017 Quality Account allows us to share with you the work we have been doing to enhance the health of our local community.

The contribution our staff make at Benalla Health is extraordinary. Through their skill, dedication and passion they work tirelessly to improve the health and lives of those in their care by responding to individual needs.

In the last 12 months, we are very pleased with the outcomes we have achieved especially with:

- Becoming a White Ribbon Accredited Workplace
- Planning for renovations to our new Community Rehabilitation Centre, and
- Strengthening our maternity services.

Success comes from our commitment to placing patients and their families at the centre of everything we do. You understand your health and the health of your family better than anyone else and that's why your feedback is so important to us. We encourage you to give us your feedback, both positive and negative as this will assist us to improve our services.

We hope that you enjoy reading our stories as much as we enjoy sharing them with you.



L Armstrong

Louise Armstrong
Board Chairperson
Benalla Health



Janine Holland

Janine Holland
Chief Executive Officer
Benalla Health

Statewide Plans and Statutory Requirements

Koolin Balit: Aboriginal Health Strategy

Benalla Health is working towards the Victorian Government's objectives of:

- Closing the gap in life expectancy for Aboriginal people living in Victoria
- Reducing the difference between the general population and Aboriginal people relating to infant mortality rates, morbidity and low birthweight, and
- Improving access to services and outcomes for Aboriginal people.

The Koolin Balit plan focuses on six key priorities:

1. A healthy start to life
2. A healthy childhood
3. A healthy transition to adulthood
4. Caring for older people
5. Addressing risk factors, and
6. Managing illness better with effective health services.

At Benalla Health we recognise our role in improving the health outcomes of Aboriginal people living in our community. In order to achieve the objectives outlined in the Koolin Balit strategy we partner with the Aboriginal Health Culturally Responsive Services Working Group and Central Hume Primary Care Partnership.

Benalla Health has participated in the Koolin Balit Aboriginal Health Cultural Competency Audit to understand how we can make improvements to become a culturally safe service.

Child Safety Standards

In Victoria, it is compulsory for all organisations that provide services to children to meet the Child Safe Standards to protect children against abuse. Understanding the importance of protecting children we have:

- Implemented a Child Safe Policy
- Introduced a Child Safe Procedure
- Developed a procedure for mandatory reporting of a child at risk
- Ensured all Benalla Health staff have a current Working With Children Check
- Promoted Kids Helpline and body safety for children within the organisation
- Ensured all advertising/recruitment now includes a statement regarding our commitment to Child Safety, and
- Included a question regarding knowledge of child safety within our interview question template.

Ending Family Violence

The Victorian Government's Ending Family Violence Plan hopes to achieve a Victoria free from family violence by implementing all 227 recommendations of Australia's first Royal Commission into Family Violence.

Family violence is a key issue in Benalla, recognised as having the 5th highest rate of family violence in the State. This issue affects women and children disproportionately and has profound impacts on the psychological and physical health of those individuals affected. This is why we are passionate about ending family violence and have been supporting the Government's plan at a local level through our involvement in the following key groups:

- Benalla Family Violence Prevention Network
- Victorian White Ribbon Committee, and
- Northeast Victoria White Ribbon Committee.

White Ribbon Workplace

As the largest employer and health service provider in Benalla, we understand we need to be active in taking steps to stop violence against women within the workplace. As part of our work to end family violence we adopted the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program to create a safer and more respectful work environment. As a part of the program we had to meet 15 criteria including:

- Leadership commitment
- Internal and external communication
- Demonstrated engagement in the prevention of violence against women
- Policies, procedures and documentation
- Staff training
- Risk assessment
- Response to victims and perpetrators, and
- Evaluation.

Due to staff efforts and commitment we were awarded White Ribbon Workplace accreditation in February 2017. For more information go to <https://www.whiteribbon.org.au/stop-violence-against-women/get-workplace-involved/workplace-accreditation/>

Benalla Health is implementing the Royal Women's Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence Framework to assist our staff to identify and respond to family violence. Through the provision of healthcare we can help link individuals with specialist support services to assist them to leave family violence and rebuild their lives.

As a part of the Framework, staff have been trained in the Six Steps of Sensitive Inquiry to help support all our patients. The six steps include:

- Step 1 – Identification
- Step 2 – Supportive Response
- Step 3 – Identify Risk Factors
- Step 4 – Action Planning & Steps Toward Safety
- Step 5 – Offer Referral, and
- Step 6 – Documentation.

For more information go to <http://haveyoursay.thewomens.org.au/shrfv-project>

In the last year we have continued with our community place based Family Violence Prevention Strategy through our:

- White Ribbon Day March
- White Ribbon Day Supporter’s Program
- White Ribbon Breaking the Silence school program
- Rock and Water program for young women and girls
- Real Men Make Great Dads
- Parents Early Education Program, and
- Respectful Relationships in Schools Program.

We support the work of Centre Against Violence by providing rooms in our Benalla Community Care Centre to allow the community to access their services locally. Each strategy is well under way and being supported by Benalla Health staff to ensure that our community has access to timely and effective programs.



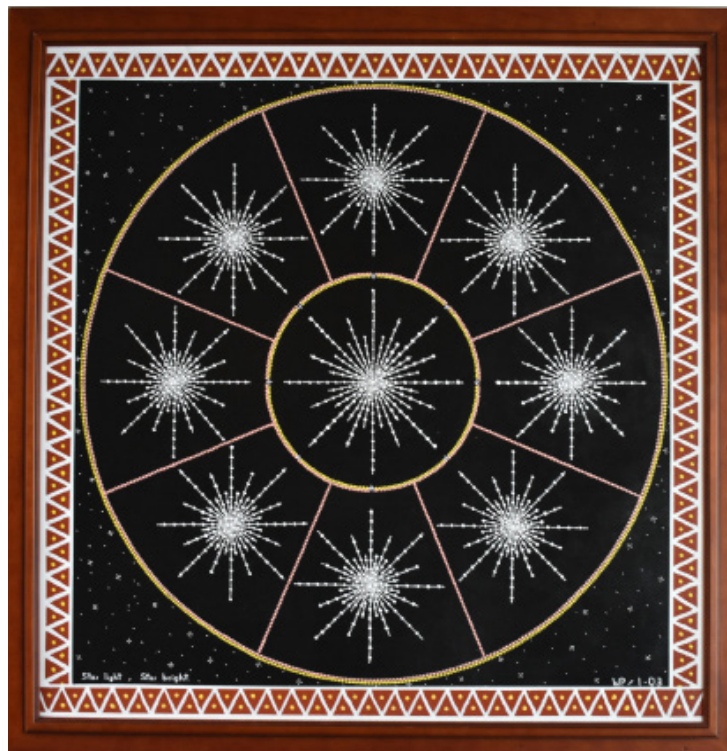
Images of the White Ribbon Day March in November 2016

Consumer, Carer and Community Participation

Consumers, carers and community involvement in a healthcare service are essential to provide the right care for individuals. This engagement assists Benalla Health to be responsive to the needs of the community and those who use our service.

Improving Care for Aboriginal Patients

The Department of Health and Human Services introduced the Improving Care for Aboriginal Patients (ICAP) program to improve accurate identification of, and quality health care for Aboriginal people accessing Victorian public hospitals. One of the key priorities of the ICAP is for services to establish and maintain partnerships, and continue to engage and collaborate with Aboriginal organisations, Elders and Aboriginal communities. We are committed to continuing our work with the Aboriginal Health Culturally Responsive Services Working Group and Central Hume Primary Care Partnership to help improve healthcare access for Aboriginal people.



This painting was painted and donated by Mr. Wally Pagel in appreciation of the care he received at Benalla Health

Mental Health - our Priority

Providing care to people experiencing mental illness is a key priority. Benalla Health has been working closely with the community to better support people with mental health issues and significantly, those people in “crisis” or at risk of suicide. In partnership with Benalla Rural City and the community we established the Benalla Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Group.

The Group aims to improve:

1. The mental health of Benalla residents
2. Mental health services in Benalla Rural City
3. How mental health crises are managed
4. Community awareness of what services are available
5. Community knowledge of what mental health is and what actions they can take to support people with mental health
6. Community action and responses to support the improvement of mental health in Benalla, and
7. Reduction of the levels of suicide in Benalla Rural City.

In the past 12 months the Group has:

- Established the Connect Benalla website www.connectbenalla.org.au
- Distributed 5,000 mental health information cards
- Successfully lobbied to pilot the Suicide Prevention Project to be based in Benalla, and
- Established a Mental Health Telehealth Service between our Urgent Care Centre and Northeast Health Wangaratta’s Mental Health Crisis Team.

Via the Telehealth Service people in crisis are able to have a video consultation/assessment with a mental health clinician without having to travel to Wangaratta. This will result in people in crisis having access to the right support at the right time.

The project has helped the Action Group align its objectives to the newly released Suicide Prevention Framework.

Disability Action Plan

The State Government requires all public health services to have a disability action plan to reduce and remove the barriers to access experienced by people with a disability. The Benalla Health Disability Access Plan ensures that people with disabilities have the resources and supports to access our service for holistic care.

Interpreter Services

Benalla Health is committed to ensuring our services are accessible to all who require them. If needed, access to interpreter services will be provided to enable the best health outcomes.

Cultural Diversity and Consumer Committee

Through the Consumer Participation Plan 2016-2020, Benalla Health aims to build the ability for consumers and community members to participate in decision making process about their own care and the organisation. The plan contains four major themes:

1. Clinical governance and quality improvement systems to support partnering with consumers
2. Partnering with consumers in their own care
3. Health literacy, and
4. Partnering with consumers in organisational change.

The progress of the plan is overseen by the Cultural Diversity and Consumer Committee (CDCC) which is made up of a number of Board members and five consumer representatives. This Committee ensures that consumers and community members have a voice in how Benalla Health provides care to the wider community. The CDCC have set goals to be achieved over the next three years and the first year's goals are well underway.



Members of the Board and Executive with Consumer Representatives from the CDCC

Rebuilding the Community Rehabilitation Centre

For the last couple of years we have been working towards renovating our Community Rehabilitation Centre. These renovations came about as the facilities became outdated and no longer catered well to services located in the building. To better support the physiotherapy, occupational therapy and day activities, we asked the community to support the Community Rehabilitation Centre through two consecutive annual appeals. Through the generosity of the community \$153,028 was raised to help refresh the Centre. In January, planning began to provide the Centre more space, a more welcoming atmosphere and improved functional workspaces for staff. As part of the planning process we established a user group of staff from community health, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, housekeeping, occupational health and safety, infection control and engineering. The knowledge and experience of staff was essential in the re-development of the Centre. We also sought the ideas and feedback from consumers and community members regarding the interior design of the building. We are extremely pleased with the progress of the Centre and look forward to the official opening in November.

Mary's* story – partnership in care

I suffer from horrible headaches that left me bedridden and unable to do the things I wanted to do. I went to my doctor who recommended I see a physiotherapist. I started seeing Geoff at Benalla Health and he was so helpful. Geoff used manual manipulation (massage) on my jaw, neck and shoulders to ease the pain. We also tried dry needling but I didn't like it so he suggested jaw exercises to help prevent the headaches. Together we found the right treatment that worked for me. Geoff was very professional and good at explaining to me what was happening. He helped me understand that issues in my jaw were causing my headaches. His explanation gave me real peace of mind as not knowing what is going on can be a bit scary. I still get the occasional headache, but the pain is less and now I'm clear headed to think, socialise and get out and about doing what I want to do. It has improved my quality of life and made me happier and I have been able to reduce my medications, which I'm really pleased about.

*Name has been changed for patient's privacy.



Allied Health team members (from left to right) - Laura Ford, Lisa Scanlon, Lisa Hazel and Geoff Draper

Our Volunteers

Benalla Health is very fortunate to have a wonderful team of volunteers that support both our staff and patients. This year we had 35 volunteers, including 6 new volunteers.

Our volunteers help in the following areas:

- Day Procedure Unit
- Palliative Care
- Acute Ward
- Day Activities
- Morrie Evans
- Driving

The palliative care volunteers provide a highly regarded service for clients by visiting them at home to provide support. Volunteers spend time creating heartfelt memoirs so clients can share their life story with their families. The memoirs contain photos of the client over their lifetime and are bound as a beautiful keepsake for the families. These memoirs are often used at the client's funeral. It's a gift greatly appreciated by families.

Our volunteers in the Day Procedure Unit help make patients comfortable by providing reassurance, companionship, cups of tea and sandwiches. One volunteer is so dedicated she comes in every morning to deliver the daily newspaper to patients. Long service awards were celebrated for a number of volunteers this year:

- 26 years Dorothy Meagher
- 15 years Margaret Nankervis (who sadly has passed away)
- 10 years Enra Howell
- 10 Years Jill McKinnon

Benalla Health sincerely appreciates the work and contribution of all volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering call us on 5761 4374.

Harp healing - Raelene's story

Raelene began to volunteer after her own experiences of being in hospital made her passionate about improving patient wellbeing. Raelene spent a great deal of time in hospital when she was young and while she still faces health challenges, she regularly gives her time to bringing cheer to patients by playing the harp to them each Wednesday at Benalla Health. "I feel like I can make a difference by bringing my harp along – the patients respond really well to it as some are frightened to be in hospital and just need something that can help them relax," she said.

"Some go to sleep while they are listening to the music and that makes me think that it is helping them become calmer and they really enjoy the experience."

Raelene said she started playing the harp after a heart operation whilst in hospital in Melbourne.

"The chaplain brought it to me as it is something you can play with one hand, which is really helpful when you have health restrictions," she said. "I really enjoy volunteering my time at the hospital."

Benalla and District Memorial Hospital Auxiliary

Benalla Health is privileged to have a very active and passionate group of women who work hard to support our health service. The auxiliary volunteer their time to raise funds to buy equipment and other resources to ensure patients and their families have a positive experience.

The tireless work of the auxiliary include:

- Raffles
- Craft and produce market stalls
- Open gardens, and
- Recipe books.

In the past year alone, the women raised over \$22,000. This money has gone toward purchasing a trolley for our Urgent Care Centre. Thank you ladies for the wonderful contribution you make to our hospital and to the health of the wider Benalla community, your work is truly appreciated.



Members of the Benalla and District Memorial Hospital Auxiliary are proud of their fundraising activities

Our Staff

The staff at Benalla Health are crucial to providing safe and high quality healthcare. Every one of our staff works hard to fulfil the organisation's values of compassion, empathy, accountability, respect and excellence. Benalla Health aims to provide a workplace where all staff feel supported, valued and respected. Opportunities are provided for our staff to develop the skills and knowledge to build a successful and rewarding career at Benalla Health.



Acute Ward Staff

(Back row) Matt Gill, Hannah Heine, Karen Barrow, Kim Woosnam, Milla Ervin-Watson, Kelsey Moss, Sara Goode, Anne Fitzgerald
(Front row) Maurice Henderson, Layton Hart

People Matter Survey

The People Matter Survey allows staff to give us feedback about Benalla Health as an employer. Employees are asked about what it's like to work with their colleagues, managers and senior leaders. Questions also gauge whether they feel engaged with the organisation and enjoy their jobs. The survey allowed us to obtain meaningful feedback to inform workplace improvements.

In 2017, 63% of our staff completed the Survey. Of the staff who responded, 77% believe Benalla Health manages patient safety well. When compared to similar healthcare services, this is slightly higher than the State average of 75%.

The Survey also found:

- The majority of staff believe Benalla Health provides a safe work environment
- Staff believe the organisation is proactive in preventing, responding to and supporting mental health in the workplace, and
- Most staff feel they are able to manage their work/life balance.

We believe we have achieved these positive results through the development of a holistic health and wellbeing support program. The program provides staff with:

- Flexible working hours
- The ability to purchase leave
- Access to an Employee Assistance Program
- Peer support team
- Monthly access to a clinical psychologist
- Transitioning to retirement support
- Equal opportunity contact officers, and
- Family Violence support officers.

Working Towards a Healthy Workplace

Benalla Health is committed to providing a healthy and supportive workplace, that is why we have registered to be a part of the Victorian Government's Workplace Achievement Program. Through the Achievement Program we will make sure our work environment promotes good health and removes aspects that encourage poor health. It is about making the healthy choice the easy choice. The program has five priorities and we will work to:

- Make it easy for staff to engage in physical activity
- Promote good mental health and wellbeing
- Support staff to eat healthy
- Limit alcohol use, and
- Reduce the smoking rates of our staff.

The Cancer Council of Victoria will assess and award us when we reach the benchmark for each priority. To find out more go to <http://www.achievementprogram.health.vic.gov.au/>



Benalla Health staff embrace the Workplace Achievement Program across all disciplines including: Administration, Nursing, Allied Health, Housekeeping and Catering

Getting Back to Work

Benalla Health support staff who are recovering from injury or illness to return to work in a timely and effective manner.

It is important that staff have access to the supports they need, regardless of being injured at work or at home. Our injury management program has been enhanced so more staff can return to work safely.

As a part of the program we can:

- Reduce hours – less days or shorter days
- Manage rosters
- Change job responsibilities i.e. clinical staff undertaking project work
- Provide equipment and modifications to work spaces to make job tasks easier, and
- Provide access to physiotherapy or counselling.

This program will ensure our staff are healthy and happy, and we are able to retain a highly skilled and experienced workforce.

Staff Education

Benalla Health provide a range of education programs for our staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to provide our patients and their families with the best possible care.

The graduate nurse program supported 13 graduate nurses who commenced their career at Benalla Health.

We also provided 163 placements for students completing tertiary health courses; this included 146 nursing, 7 medical and 10 allied health students.

Wound Care Education

To improve the care of patients with complex wounds, we support our nurses to participate in the High Risk Foot Clinic with our senior Podiatrist Lauren Whinray (pictured right) to assist in their professional learning.

The aim of this program is to increase awareness of the discipline of podiatry and the range of wound care/high risk foot clinic interventions available at Benalla Health.

Staff can book in to attend sessions each week. So far 15 nurses have been involved in the program and have learnt to adopt a collaborative approach to help improve chronic disease self-management and wound healing outcomes.



Quality and Safety

Ensuring the quality and safety of our services is our number one priority. To ensure we are providing a quality service, we are always measuring our performance against statewide data and seeking ways to improve.

Community Feedback

The best place to find out if we are delivering high calibre services is from feedback from our community. This is why we welcome feedback from patients, residents, clients, families and the wider community.

In the 12 month period Benalla Health received:

- 23 compliments, and
- 29 complaints.

Compliments across Benalla Health

Acute Ward	Theatre/Day Procedure Unit	Urgent Care Centre	Morrie Evans Ward	Home Nursing	Community Health
4	4	2	2	5	6

Often one compliment could be a collection of cards and notes that are grouped and entered together. This also does not reflect the boxes of chocolates and verbal appreciation that our staff receive.

Complaints across Benalla Health

Acute Ward	Theatre/Day Procedure Unit	Urgent Care Centre	Morrie Evans Ward	Home Nursing	Community Health
12	2	10	1	0	4

Improvements are made in areas where we have not met the expectations of patients, residents, clients and their families and carers. Common themes relate to poor communication, patient rights and access to services. All complaints are taken seriously and enable us to review processes and systems.

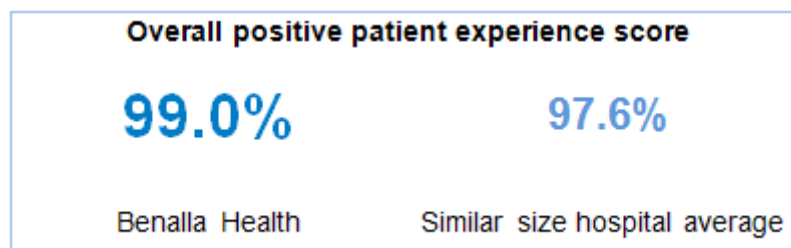
Patient Complaints - Helping us be Safer

In January this year, we received a complaint from a family about their mother's discharge from our acute ward to an aged care facility. The family and the facility did not have the information about the mother's swallowing and mobility problems. We should have given the facility this information so they had the right food consistency and mobility equipment to prevent choking and falls. The complaint allowed us to recognise we needed to do a better job of sharing information about patients to other services once they left our hospital to ensure their safety. From this one complaint we looked at the forms and processes we use when a patient is admitted and discharged from hospital. We made changes to simplify the forms to make them easier to use and locate the right information quicker. We also looked at how we can use electronic discharge to support patients discharged to community health services. These changes will ensure the safety and quality of care for all patients and it started with the feedback from one family.

Positive Patient Experiences

The Victorian Health Experience Survey asks our patients about their time at Benalla Health. Research has shown if someone has a positive experience in hospital they are more likely to get better sooner and have better overall health outcomes.

For the 2016/2017 year, 99% of our patients had a positive experience at Benalla Health. To ensure patients continue to have positive experiences at Benalla Health, we will maintain our focus on providing person centred care through our core values.



Compliments

“Your team at Benalla Health were the true embodiment of a multi-disciplinary team approach which was not driven by what a podiatrist/physiotherapist/nurse etc could offer, but the needs of the person. I observed first-hand the compassionate, professional and empathetic way in which my mother was treated by each and every member of the team and the seamless integration between the members of the healthcare team. Your service and team are truly exceptional.”

• *Daughter of high-risk foot clinic client*

“I feel so well supported by the Dietitian and the Diabetes Educator and they help me to stay on track and feel more confident to manage my diabetes. I wouldn't have gotten this service in the town where I used to live.”

• *Male client*

“I was blown away with my experience at Benalla Health. From the time I walked through the door I was greeted with friendly staff. I was so impressed with the cleanliness of the hospital.”

• *Female patient*

“I'm very thankful for all the support, work and effort put in by the Health Independent Program team. You haven't just done your job, but changed the potential outcomes of my wife's life by giving her goals and the motivation to not give up. You provided guidance for her physical recovery and assisted with her neuropsychological condition. I was so pleased with the effort the staff had put in over such a long period and the comfort they brought my wife.”

• *Client's husband*

“My husband asked me to send your wonderful staff and hospital a token of his appreciation. Receiving your wonderful wishes on the 12 months anniversary of his passing prompted me to send the hospital a donation. Thank you all so much.”

• *Client's wife*

Accreditation

Benalla Health was re-accredited against the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards in July 2017, with our residential aged care facility Morrie Evans Wing (MEW) due for re-accreditation in May 2018.

The outcomes of these reviews will be highlighted in the 2017/2018 Annual Quality Account. These standards support safety in health care agencies to use best practice when caring for people and their families. The 10 National Standards are:

- Standard 1 - Governance for Safety and Quality in Health Service Organisations
- Standard 2 - Partnering with Consumers
- Standard 3 - Preventing and Controlling Healthcare Associated Infections
- Standard 4 - Medication Safety
- Standard 5 - Patient Identification and Procedure Matching
- Standard 6 - Clinical Handover
- Standard 7 - Blood and Blood Products
- Standard 8 - Preventing and Managing Pressure Injuries
- Standard 9 - Recognising and Responding to Clinical Deteriorating
- Standard 10 - Preventing Falls and Harm from Falls

Responding to Adverse Events

When a person receiving health care is caused harm or potential harm (near miss), it is called an adverse event. All adverse events are investigated in a process that looks at reasons why the event occurred and what can be done to prevent it occurring again. Benalla Health promotes a 'just culture' when investigating any incident, including adverse events. This is where staff are supported to report incidents and adverse events when they happen, and then participate in a review of the process. A just culture looks at systems and processes, rather than the persons involved, to identify areas for improvement, as this will bring sustainable change.

This means looking at equipment, charts and forms, policies and procedures that support delivery of care to ensure they are current and best practice, or if they require updating or changing. We also hold staff accountable for their actions and they are supported with education and training if shortfalls are identified.

Our governance system ensures that all adverse events are reported through our clinical governance processes which include sub-committees of the Board, and multidisciplinary peer reviews involving medical, nursing and allied health staff. Recommendations and actions are monitored through a peer review process. Benalla Health had three adverse events in 2016/2017.

Hospital Acquired Infections

In 2016/2017, there were no Staphylococcus Aureus Bacteraemias (SAB) infections at Benalla Health. This is a reduction from the one infection in 2015/2016.

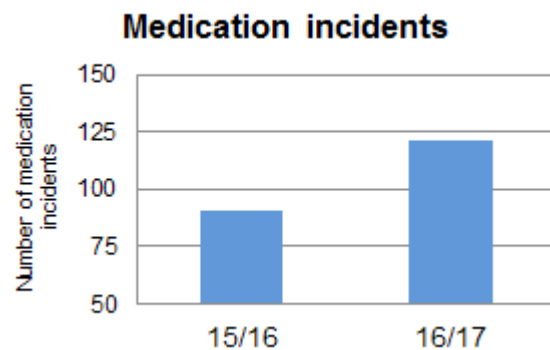
We always aim to have no SAB infections and we work to achieve this through:

- Annual aseptic non-touch technique education and assessments for clinical staff
- Ensuring all staff are competent with hand hygiene
- Hand hygiene compliance audits across our clinical areas
- IV cannulation education and competencies
- Annual peripheral IV site audits to review practice against policy
- Our peripheral IV cannulation policy, and
- Continuous surveillance of blood stream infections.

Medication Safety

Administering medications is a significant part of what nurses do when they care for patients. When nurses check and give medications, they use ‘the seven rights of administration’ to prevent medication errors. These are:

- Right medication
- Right person
- Right dose
- Right time
- Right route
- Right reason, and
- Right documentation.

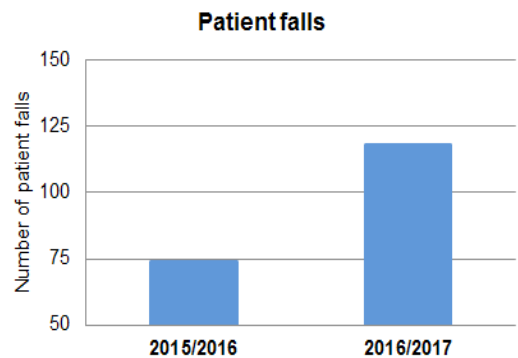


Medication safety includes storing, prescribing, dispensing and giving the medication. Not all incidents that are reported result in a medication error. Staff are actively encouraged to report all medication incidents. These are then reported to the Medication Committee to identify any trends or key issues and find ways to prevent similar things happening in the future.

There was an increase in reported incidents from 2015/2016 to 2016/2017 but fortunately no medication errors resulted in adverse harm to a patient. All patients now have a medication management plan as soon as they are admitted to the ward.

Preventing Falls and Harm from Falls

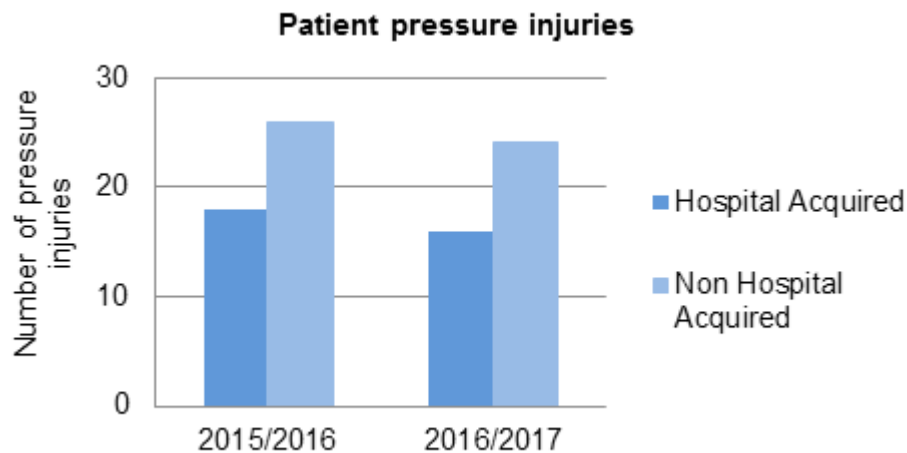
Falls can cause serious injury so it is important we screen all patients to identify those who are at higher risk of having a fall and implement strategies to prevent falls happening. In 2016/2017, there were 44 more falls than the year before. To work on reducing fall numbers, we have updated our screening, assessment and falls prevention forms. These changes are expected to help us reduce falls by 25% in 2017/2018, with a zero falls target as a future goal.



Preventing and Managing Pressure Injuries

Similar to falls risk screening, all patients are assessed on admission for their risk of developing a pressure injury with the aim to put strategies in place to prevent the pressure injury from occurring from the outset.

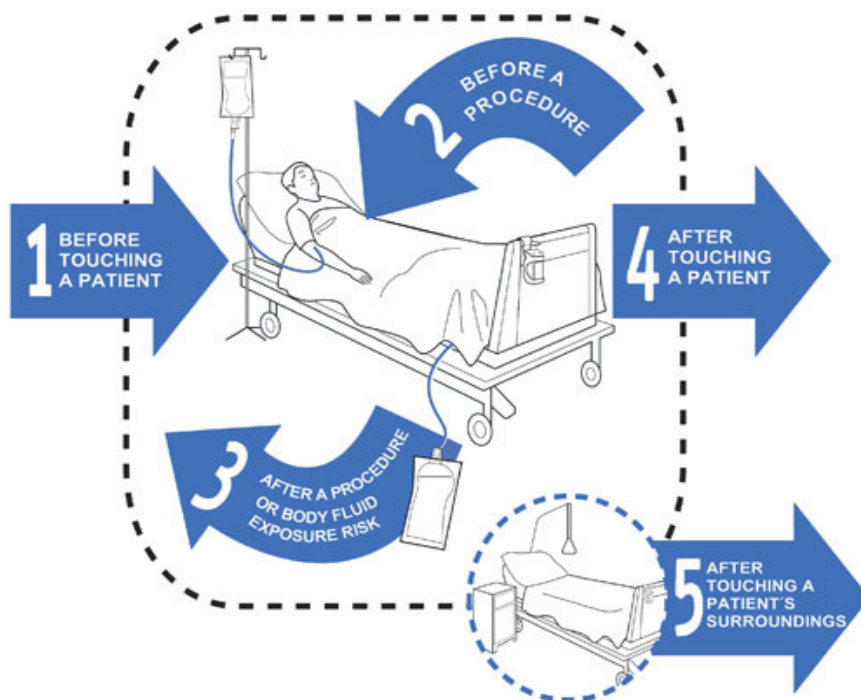
Benalla Health monitors both pressure injuries that are present when a patient arrives at hospital and those that develop after admission. Although preventing pressure injuries is our main aim, we need to identify and treat pressure injuries patients come in with so they are healing when the patient is discharged from the hospital. Compared with last year, pressure injuries were reduced.



Hand Hygiene

Effective hand hygiene is the single most important strategy to prevent the spread of infections within healthcare services. Benalla Health are continuously training and educating visitors and clients on when and how to keep their hands clean to reduce the spread of germs.

Three observational audits a year are undertaken to make sure staff are following the five moments of hand hygiene. This model highlights the point in which germs can be transferred between a healthcare worker and patients. These audits allow us to make sure we are doing our best to reduce infections and continuously improve on our processes and in educating our clients and staff members.

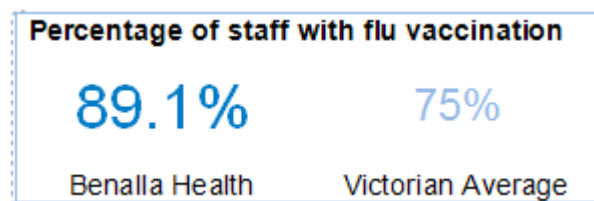


Staff Immunisation Program

Benalla Health recommends all staff receive yearly flu vaccination because it helps protect both staff and patients from illness.

A free vaccination program is offered for all employees, contractors and volunteers to prevent our vulnerable patients and residents from experiencing serious complications from the flu. Nurses are trained to give staff their annual flu vaccination.

Our high staff vaccination rates are due to our education program and public awareness, highlighting the importance of staff immunisation in the hospital environment.



Safe Use of Blood

At Benalla Health we undertake a low number of blood transfusions (approximately 80 per year), however, we must ensure that safety standards are met. To support the safe use of blood products we have policies and procedures in place to ensure the storage, consent, checking, administration and monitoring of blood and blood products is correct. The Transfusion Trainer co-ordinates all aspects of blood and blood products to ensure our practices meet this Standard. All nurses and midwives in acute and sub-acute inpatient settings complete an online learning package to understand the safety precautions needed when using blood products.

Blood and blood products are maintained in a designated blood fridge which is checked and monitored daily to make sure it is at the correct temperature. Any incidents involving blood are reported to the Patient Identification, Procedure Matching and Blood Committee and investigated.

Maternity Services

Benalla Health has a shared model of obstetric care. Our experienced midwives work in partnership with local GP obstetricians to support women through their antenatal, perinatal and postnatal care. Through this team model we are able to offer women with low and medium risk pregnancies:

- Twenty-four hours a day midwife care
- On call GP obstetrician care
- Private rooms
- The ability for partners to stay with mother and baby
- Epidurals
- Caesarean sections, and
- Phototherapy for newborns.

Support is continued after mother and baby have left hospital, with home visits from our midwives to support postnatal care. Our small team of experienced midwives ensure individualised care and attention throughout the entire pregnancy.

Our Maternity Performance

There are 10 performance indicators Benalla Health monitors to report against on the outcomes and experiences for women birthing in our hospital. These indicators are based on criteria of women aged between 20 and 34 years old with low risk pregnancy having their first baby. 2 of these indicators are: the rate of induction, and the rate of caesarean section.

For the 2016/2017 year there were 15 women who met this criteria having had their first baby at Benalla Health. Of this group, 4 women (26.7%) had an induction and 4 women (26.7%) had a caesarean section. Between January and March 2, of the 5 births (40%) were induced, 3 of the 4 births (75%) between April and June were caesarean sections.

These cases were thoroughly reviewed and discussed in our Obstetric Peer Review meetings. The inductions and caesarean sections were deemed appropriate within our Maternity Care Framework and Governance processes.

Breastfeeding SMS

Breastfeeding is the best way to feed a new baby to give them all the nutrition they need to grow and develop. Breastmilk gives babies the best start in life. However, some mothers have trouble breastfeeding when they get home.

Benalla Health worked with Maternal & Child Health and Tomorrow Today Foundation to consider ways to help mothers continue breastfeeding and feel more confident in what they were doing. From this the idea was to send new mothers a text message every week until their baby is 8 weeks old with breastfeeding tips. The text messages have been written by other local mothers who have had experiences in breastfeeding their own babies.

The project started in 2016 and, within 6 months, 28 women received these text messages. From the text messages it was identified that more women:

- Kept breastfeeding after 3 months
- Felt more confident breastfeeding, and
- Felt connected to local support services.



Feedback from the project:

“One of the texts suggested feeding my baby before she got too hungry. I took that advice and it made a real difference,” said one mother.

“It’s a great project, the messages have kept me going even when I was down and having trouble,” another mother told us.

The automatic SMS system is an inexpensive and easy way to support mothers with breastfeeding. We have recently had requests from mothers for more messages and information. All mothers who have their babies at Benalla Health receive these text messages as soon as they go home.

Surgery

Benalla Health provides over 2,000 surgeries per year. Visiting surgeons along with local GP anaesthetists provide a small range of services including:

- Cataract surgery
- Rotator cuff repair and anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) repair
- Colonoscopy and gastroscopy
- Wisdom teeth removal
- Laparoscopy, hysteroscopy and hysterectomy, and
- Cystoscopy and prostate surgery.

During 2016/2017 there were no surgical deaths at Benalla Health.

Aged Care Services

Benalla Health's Morrie Evans Wing is home to 30 residents. Our residents are provided holistic and compassionate care to ensure they feel at home and comfortable in their later years of life. A sense of family and community is created through daily activities, celebrating holidays and birthdays, monthly high teas (as shown in the picture below) and by having our own pet, Burnley the cat.

To make sure we are providing our residents with a safe home and high quality care we measure the following five indicators:

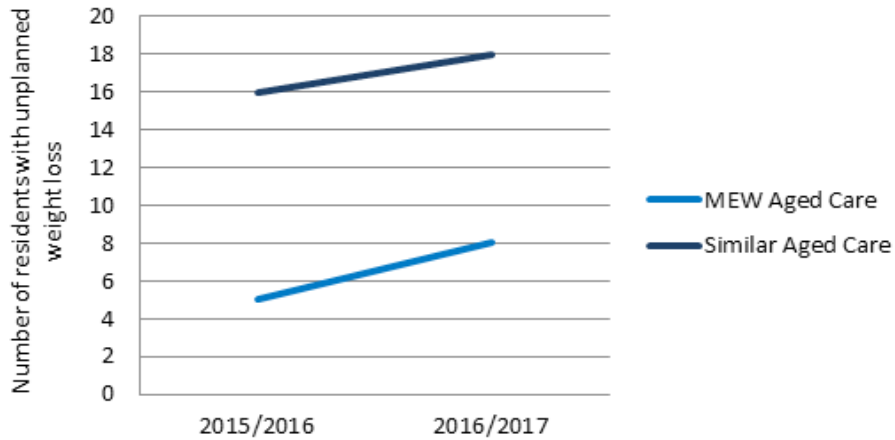
- Pressure injuries
- Use of physical restraint
- Use of nine or more medications
- Falls and fractures, and
- Unplanned weight loss.



Monitoring these indicators is especially important for residents of aged care services as they are at risk of experiencing one of them which could cause their health to deteriorate.

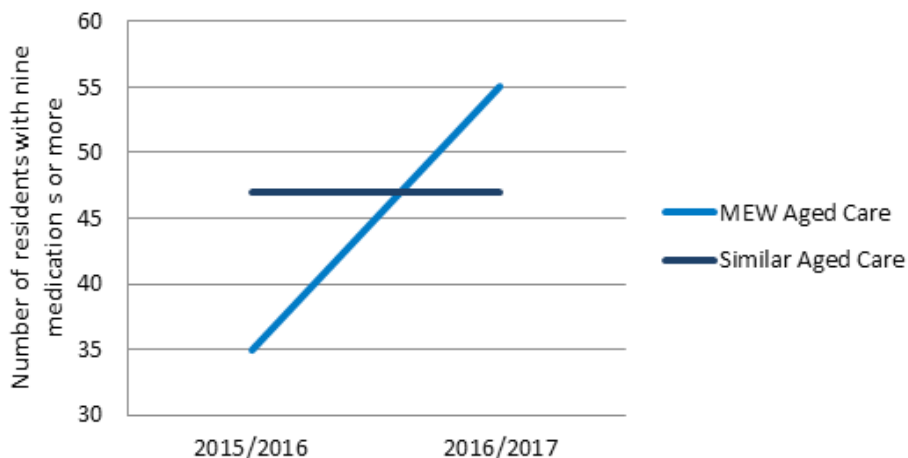
Over the past two years there has been an increase in residents who have had unplanned weight loss. This compares lower than the average of other similar hospitals.

Unplanned weight loss

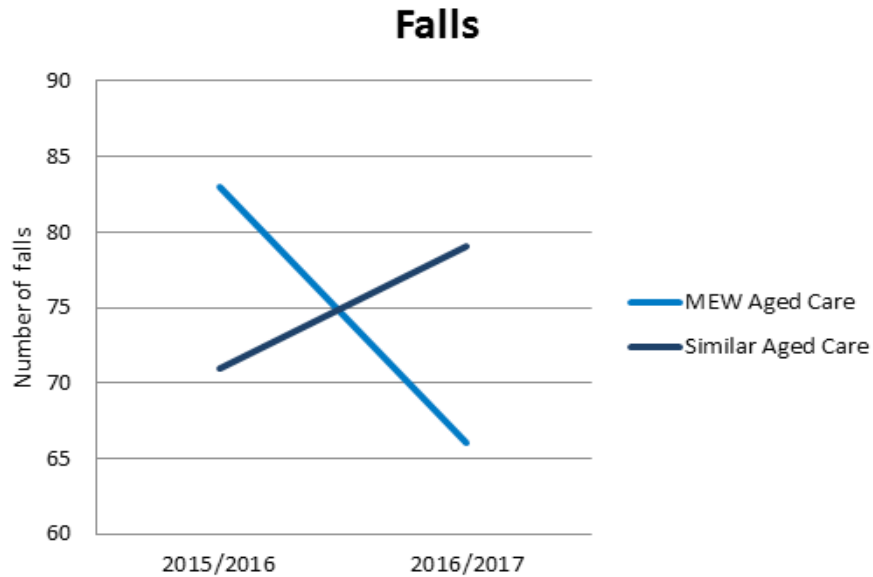


Morrie Evans Wing has seen an increase in residents with nine or more medications. Acuity of our residents and the treatment care plans determine the requirements.

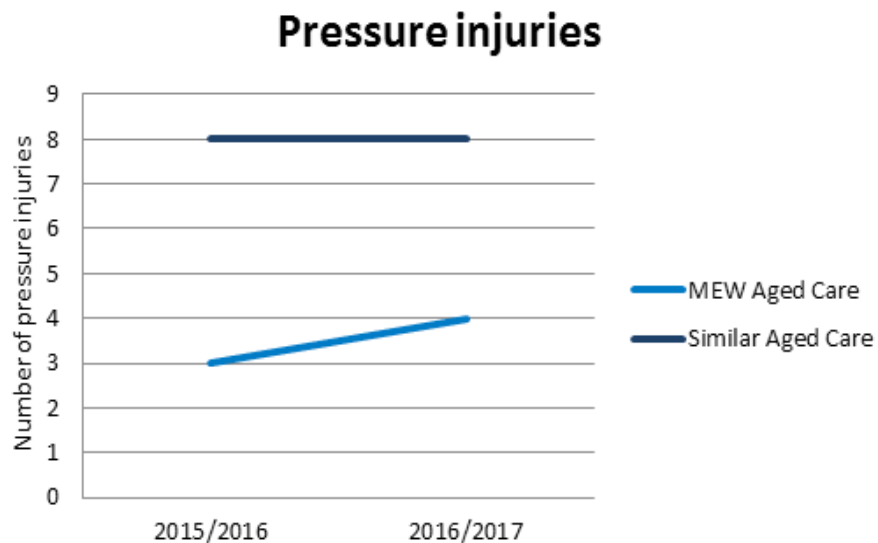
Nine or more medications



In the past two years focus to reduce the number of falls has resulted in a decrease from 83 to 66. This is below the average of other similar hospitals.



The number of pressure injuries increased by one in the past two year however, it is below the average for hospitals of a similar size.



No residents within Morrie Evans Wing have been restrained in the last two years.

Committed to Care

“Often I am asked why I work in aged care. This is not a difficult question for me to answer. What other profession allows for the building of long term relationships, not only with the residents in our care, but the extended circle of family and friends that make up the “Morrie Evans family”.

There are never ending moments of joy, laughter and sorrow. Yes, there is a risk of becoming too attached to our residents, but that is what it means to be human and express humanity to our fellow “man”. It can be conveyed by way of a simple touch, sharing a joke, or recognising a smile of empathy.

Coming into care is a difficult choice for residents and loved ones. There is the sense of loss of one’s independence and (to a degree) identity that if not acknowledged, can quickly deteriorate into depression and isolation. The ability to recognise and respond to this experience is key to helping the resident and family come to terms with the situation and enjoy a life still to be lived to its fullest.

Finally there is the experience of palliative care. Whilst the inevitability of death is faced by everyone, the ability to experience “a good death” is central to this final stage of life. Guiding residents and their family through this stage offers opportunities for expressions of love, remembrance, compassion, joy and a celebration of a life well lived.

Very recently, after the passing of a resident, a family member conveyed to me that the resident appreciated everything that we had done. That MEW had become the home they could never have and the residents and staff, the family that they had never known. This is the real reward of aged care.”

Nathan Willoughby. Nurse Unit Manager, Morrie Evans Wing

Escalating Care

Escalation of care processes are important in making sure patients get timely and appropriate care to prevent their condition from worsening. To ensure there is appropriate recognition of a patient's deteriorating health early, have processes that include a colour coded system to quickly alert nurses when a patient's vital signs such as heart rate, blood pressure or temperature are out of the normal range.

Abnormal observations are then reviewed by a 'Deteriorating Patient' nurse to start interventions to prevent a medical emergency. Deteriorating Patient nurses are rostered on every shift and day of the week. If the patient continues to get worse, the nurse will call a Code Blue for a medical emergency. When a Code Blue is called, available nursing and medical staff attend to help stabilise the patient.

Benalla Health understands its capacity to provide care and will transfer patients to other hospitals when it is identified the care needs cannot be facilitated.

Escalation in Urgent Care Centre

Anne* brought her five-month old baby, Sarah* to the Urgent Care Centre after hours concerned that Sarah's cough was not getting better after a few days. Anne was looking for advice and reassurance from the nurses. The UCC nurse assessed Sarah and observed her vital signs were outside normal range. These observations led to the escalation of care process being initiated with an urgent call to the on call doctor to attend and review Sarah. When Sarah was seen by the doctor, it became clear Sarah was too unwell to be cared for at Benalla Health and was quickly transferred to a Melbourne hospital with the right resources to care for her. Through our processes we made sure Sarah was able to get the right care in the time needed. The prompt action by the nurses and doctors resulted in Sarah recovering well. Any delay in care may not have seen such a positive result.

**Names have been changed for the patient's privacy.*

Team Work

“I watch my staff put their heart and soul into their job to provide the best possible care to the community. The nurses of Urgent Care Centre are the first point of contact that make the decision about the urgency of presentation and required resources. They go above and beyond to meet the needs of the community.

The presentations are varied, in the last month we have seen multiple non-urgent cases from minor lacerations and health checks, to urgent cases that require life-saving action to remove a blood clot or resuscitate paediatric patients. The staff place themselves at risk when patients present with contagious infections or aggressive behaviour, yet they continue to come to work and advocate for their patients and provide an empathetic ear.

I believe the good story of the UCC is our nursing staff. Their continued drive to provide the best care by educating and supporting themselves and their patients whilst never losing their compassion is inspiring.”

- Melissa Reid, Nurse Unit Manager of Urgent Care Centre



Urgent Care Centre personnel from left to right - Katlyn Hammer (student nurse), Miriam Franzi, Mel Parker, Melissa Reid, Jodie-Lee Hunt, Liddy Ringdal (student nurse)

Community Health Services

Benalla Health provides a range of community health services for the local community, either in client's homes or from the Benalla Community Care – Ray Sweeney Centre.

Community health services provided include:

- Chronic disease support groups
- Community and home nursing
- Counseling/social work
- Diabetes education
- Health independence program
- Health promotion programs
- Occupational therapy
- Dietitian
- High risk foot clinic
- Palliative care
- Podiatry
- Physiotherapy
- Speech pathology

Improving Community Health Services

Last year, Community Health reviewed the referral processes used by the various agencies and services that use the Benalla Community Care - Ray Sweeney Centre as part of the No Wrong Door – Pathways to Safety Project. Talking to other community services enabled staff and community members to find out what worked and what could be improved as to how people accessed our services. The feedback was used to develop an action plan to make it easier for people to use our services.

One of the biggest challenges identified was the community not being aware of the full range of services provided by Benalla Community Care - Ray Sweeney Centre. A community awareness plan, which included promotional material and a greater Facebook presence was initiated.

Going forward, other services will be asked to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure each client gets the right service, at the right time and in the right place no matter which service they contact first.

Continued improvement to the continuity of care for those experiencing mental health and family violence remains a priority. Continued consultation with our community about the services and care pathways to support these individuals achieve better health will be maintained as a focus.

Empowering Independence - Ian's Story

Ian Croxford had major heart surgery at the age of 59. After surgery his doctor encouraged him to go along to a cardiac rehabilitation group. He went to his first appointment and decided it wasn't for him because, "my mates with heart problems said you didn't need Cardiac Rehabilitation. I also didn't know what I wanted out of the rehab as I didn't understand what it was about."

Over the next year, Ian started to feel that his body was having trouble keeping up with the work he had to do on the farm. Ian found it difficult to ask for help; he thought the operation should have cured the problem. Ian went to see his doctor and she sent him to Benalla Health's Cardiac Rehabilitation Group. "I only turned up to rehab because the doctor told me I had to come."

"It was amazing. I learnt more about heart conditions by being with people who were going through the same things as me. I stopped worrying about looking like a fool, and I asked more questions when I didn't understand something."

"The first time I was in a room with the Cardiac Nurse there was knowledge coming out of her... she could explain everything to me. The nurse feedback to the doctor and keeping her up to date made it easier for me."

With the help of the group Ian has changed his eating and exercise, altered his way of thinking, increased his understanding of heart disease and was able to speak with his doctor as a partner in his own health. "The rehab group was a hell of a benefit to me and I got a heap out of it. I'm glad I have done it, if I didn't I would be less in control of my health than what I am in now."

Ian wanted to tell his story to encourage other people with heart problems to speak to their doctors and healthcare teams, and not be afraid to ask for help.



Ian Croxford and staff from the Health Independence Program

Building Vegetable Gardens, Leading to Healthy Families

In Benalla 1 in 12 people run out of food every week. The number of families needing emergency food has risen in the past year. Benalla Health wanted to ensure availability for more families to have easy access to cheap healthy food. Partnering with St Vincent de Paul Society of Benalla and Beechworth Correctional Centre to build wicking garden beds for local families helped establish a meaningful relationship to achieve this goal.

Wicking garden beds are simple to look after and are great at saving water, meaning local families are able to grow and eat fresh vegetables easily.

Since 2015, 51 garden beds have been built in Benalla. Each family was taught how to look after their gardens and to grow different fruits and vegetables. These families can now get cheap and healthy food straight from their back yards.

The wicking gardens have encouraged to families to:

- Eat more fruit and vegetables
- Have better mental health
- Spend less money on food, and
- Need less food relief.

The best part about the wicking gardens is - it is a fun way for kids and parents to spend time together learning new things, while being outside.

“I’m so proud that I can pick and eat the vegetables that I grew,” beams one Dad, “It’s grouse.” “I love that we work together as a family to grow our on veggies, and it’s a good way to encourage my son to get in and help out,” one Mum said.



International Women's Day

International Women's Day is celebrated every year on March 8. The day celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also calls for action to improve gender equality. This topic is especially important to Benalla Health in relation to the work being undertaken to reduce family violence in our community.

Benalla Health supported International Women's Day this year through a number of community forums with guest speaker Dr Ann O'Neill. Ann is a specialist in the areas of trauma, criminal victimisation and advocacy. Being a survivor of family violence, she brings personal experience to her presentations.

The forums included:

- A community supper with Dr Ann O'Neill discussing how to overcome adversity and strategies to cope with trauma, attended by 221 people
- A session run by Dr Ann O'Neill with parents of children aged 0-5 years about the impact of trauma on child development and strategies to help deal with trauma within the family
- A breakfast for 50 local business women and women in leadership positions with Dr Ann O'Neill speaking on how to develop resilience within their leadership
- A presentation to 162 year 10-11 students at Benalla P-12 College by Dr Ann O'Neill on resilience and the importance of speaking up and seeking support, and
- An educational session was provided to 77 year 8 students regarding cyberbullying and sexting.

The feedback from those who attended the forums was positive with many saying they had a better understanding of resilience and would implement some of the strategies Dr Ann O'Neill spoke about. We look forward to celebrating International Women's Day next year!



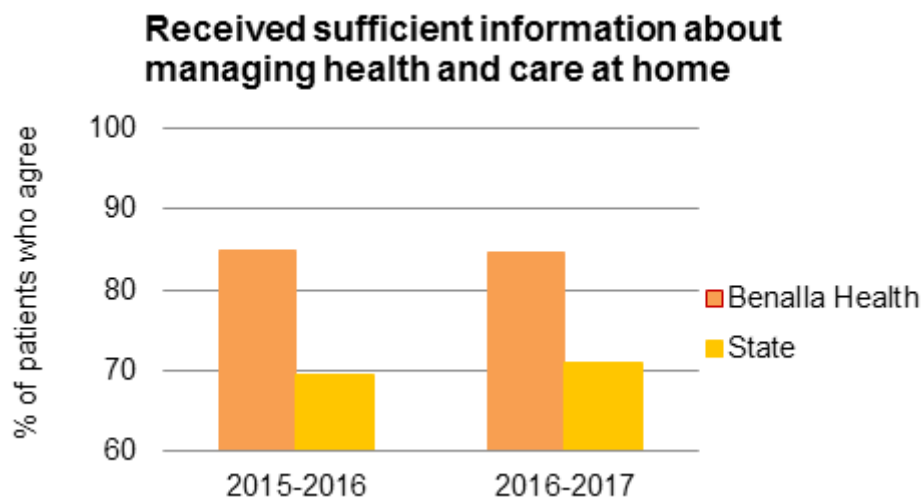
Dr Ann O'Neill with students from
Benalla P-12 College

Continuity of Care

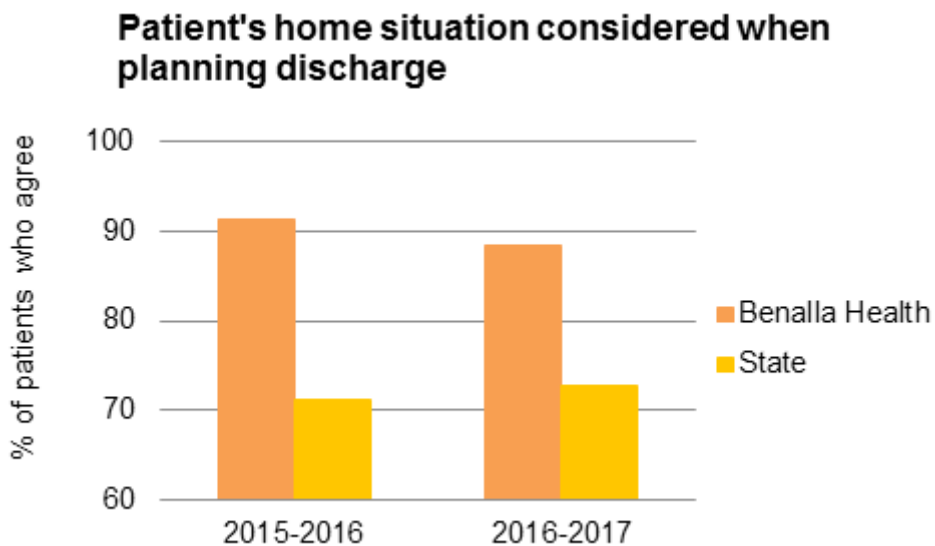
Leaving Hospital

Communication with our patients when leaving hospital is important to ensure their care and recovery continues when they go home. When patients leave Benalla Health they are sent a Victorian Healthcare Experience Survey (VHES). This allows us to understand if we are giving them enough information to help them look after their own health at home. It also provides insight into the appropriateness of planned post discharge care, and if the right support services have been organised to help patients manage at home.

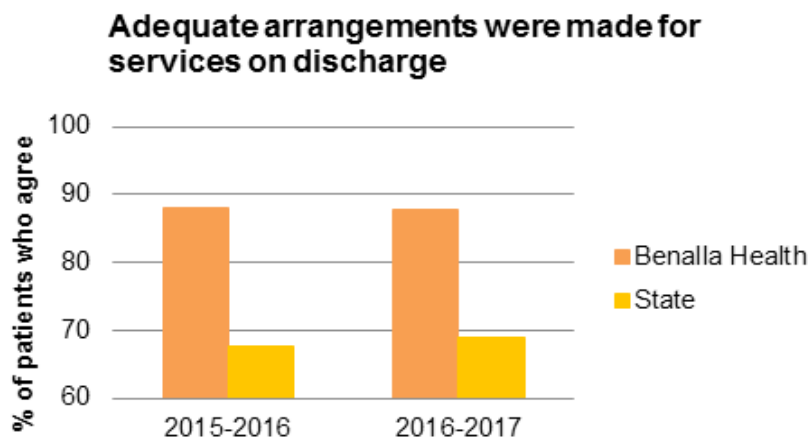
The VHES results for last year found 85% of Benalla Health patients believed they got the information they needed when they left hospital. This was above the State average of 71%.



88% of our patients believed their home situation was appropriately thought about in the planning for them to leave hospital. This is higher than the State average of 72%.



Of the patients that left hospital in the last year, 88% believed the right services were organised for them when they left hospital. The State average was 69%.



Advance Care Planning

Advance Care Plans let your healthcare workers and loved ones know your wishes for your healthcare ahead of time. Having a written plan allows everyone to know what you want when you are unwell and not able to speak for yourself.

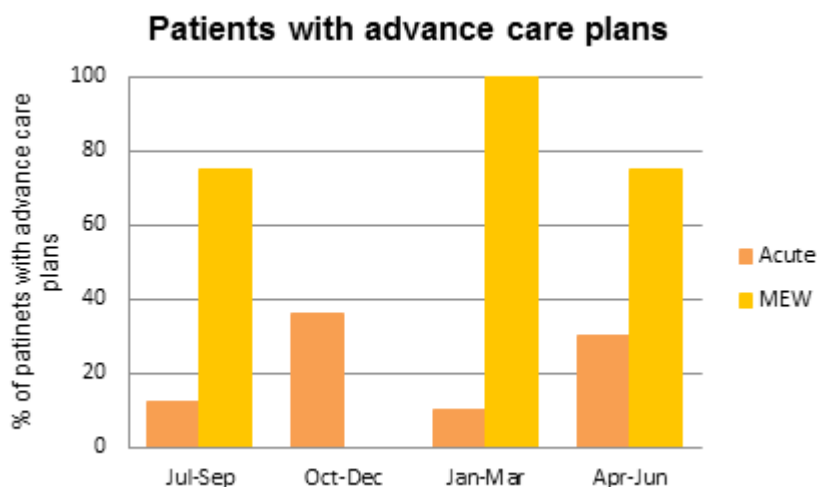
Advance Care Plans can include:

- Appointing a Medical Enduring Power of Attorney to advocate for you when you are unable to communicate your wishes
- Signing a refusal of treatment or “not for resuscitation” which outlines the treatment you do not want for a current medical condition, and
- Writing down other wishes in an advance care directive to inform your family and those caring for you helps them make decisions for you in the future.

You can change your Advance Care Plan at any time. You just need to provide your family, doctors and Benalla Health a new copy. We ask all patients who come to Benalla Health if they have an Advance Care Plan. All Advance Care Plans are kept in the patient’s medical file. We give information packs to patients and their families to help them think about writing their plan.

In Morrie Evans Wing (MEW) specially trained nurses assist residents and their families to complete an Advance Care Plan if they do not have one. Staff help residents with their Advance Care Plans to outline their wishes for pastoral care. The Advance Care Plan allows information to be communicated to staff and the family. A recent example is that we were able to organise a priest to provide last rites and have the resident’s favourite music playing in the background. The resident passed away peacefully according to their wishes.

As part of an end of life audit, all deaths are reviewed. The data below represents the number of patients and residents who passed away at Benalla Health. As there were no deaths in MEW between October and December, we are unable to determine the number of residents with advance care in place.



End of Life Care

Dying is a part of life that holds importance for people and their families. Benalla Health is committed to working with patients and their families during this emotional time to ensure their last days are peaceful. To make sure personalised care is provided, working with the patient and their family to understand what they would like in the final days of life is important.

With this information, an end of life care plan is developed and shared with everyone involved in the care of the patient so their rights, values and preferences are respected and enacted until the end. As everyone is different, their choices differ and consideration to the following is needed:

- Spiritual and religious support
- Pain and symptom management
- Providing comforts such as music, aromatherapy and personal items, and
- Counselling and support for the family.

These plans allow nurses, doctors and families to keep the patient comfortable whilst fulfilling their wishes at what can be a very difficult and emotional time.

Tell us what you think

Your opinion is important to us

Each year Benalla Health seeks feedback on the previous year's Quality of Care (Quality Account) Report from members of our community. Your feedback is important as it gives us the opportunity to improve on the Report's presentation and content.

We encourage you to take every opportunity to give your comments and feedback, both positive and negative, as this will give us the opportunity to include your ideas and comments in next year's Report.

How to provide feedback:

In person or phone	In the post (no stamp required)	Online
Benalla Health Main Reception 45-63 Coster Street, Benalla (Tel) 03 5761 2222 (Fax) 03 5761 4246	C/- Quality & Risk Manager Benalla Health Reply Paid 406 Benalla Vic 3671	https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BenallaHealthQualityAccount



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