

Your guide to living at Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged



Mercy Health
Care first



Resident handbook

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Welcome to your new home

Mercy Health, the Sisters of Mercy and our staff welcome you to your new home, Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged.

Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged offers all levels of care tailored to each person's needs and preferences, including a dementia care community, and has qualified and experienced staff around the clock.

We hope this handbook will give you the practical information you need to fully enjoy living at Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged. We are proud you have chosen us, and pleased to offer you a welcoming home where you can have the best day possible, each and every day.

At Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged we believe it is important to maintain your friendships and we encourage you to develop new ones. Your family and friends are welcome to visit at any time. We respect that each person has unique physical, emotional and spiritual needs and we want to support you to live as independently and actively as possible.

Please feel free to discuss any queries you may have with the Service Manager or your Resident Liaison Officer. We are here to help you and we are honoured to have you in our community.

Your staff and community
Mercy Health Bethlehem
Home for the Aged

About us: Mercy Health

Mercy Health provides compassionate care for people in Victoria, southern New South Wales, Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and Queensland.

We are a Catholic organisation grounded in a 2,000-year tradition of caring for others. Founded by the Sisters of Mercy, Mercy Health employs more than 6,500 people who provide acute and subacute hospital care, aged care, mental health programs, maternity and specialist women's health services, early parenting services, home care services and health worker training and development. We employ people from many cultures and backgrounds who, irrespective of their beliefs, share a common bond to care for those in need.

Mercy Health now has homes across Victoria, southern New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland. Our residential aged care supports older people to live well, be active and stay connected to family, community and friends.

Our model of care

The Mercy Health model of residential aged care guides the way we deliver our aged care services.

The model is built around our Christian beliefs that human life is sacred and must be respected and that relationships are critical to our sense of wellbeing. These beliefs inform our model's key themes.

Person-centred care

- We aim to ensure you can stay independent, active and socially connected to your family, friends and community for as long as possible according to your needs and preferences.
- We support you to continue to actively participate in life and to form and maintain meaningful relationships in a family-style environment.

- We work with you to create a home that enriches your life by overcoming boredom, inactivity, isolation and depression.
- We offer you care plans to promote your health and wellbeing, noting that while medical and nursing care are important, they are only two of the many ways to stay well.

Our model of care guides our planning for the future growth and development of our services. It also guides our research, training and innovation in responding to the care needs of our community.

We aspire to ensure you can have the best day possible, each and every day. Our commitment to person-centred care and continuous improvement is the key to achieving that aim.



Our values

Compassion / Hospitality / Respect / Innovation / Stewardship / Teamwork

Our values are the key to who we are. They reflect our culture and traditions. They indicate our aspirations and how we interact with one another and with those we serve, so that we achieve our vision and are faithful to our mission.

Our mission:	To follow Jesus Christ in His mission of mercy through the delivery of health, aged care and community services.
Our vision:	To build an enduring capacity and passion to serve those with special needs.
Our values:	The behaviours that guide our interactions with each other and those we serve: compassion, hospitality, respect, innovation, stewardship and teamwork.



Your rights and responsibilities

The *Aged Care Act (1997)*, through the Charter of Care Recipients' Rights and Responsibilities, recognises that your rights are not diminished when you move into an aged care home.

The legislation also recognises that residents in aged care homes have a responsibility to exercise their individual rights in ways that do not adversely affect other residents' rights.

Charter of Care Recipients' Rights and Responsibilities

Each care recipient of a residential care service has the right:

- to full and effective use of his or her personal, civil, legal and consumer rights
- to quality care appropriate to his or her needs
- to full information about his or her own state of health and about available treatments
- to be treated with dignity and respect, and to live without exploitation, abuse or neglect
- to live without discrimination or victimisation, and without being obliged to feel grateful to those providing his or her care and accommodation
- to personal privacy
- to live in a safe, secure and homelike environment, and to move freely both within and outside the residential care service without undue restriction
- to be treated and accepted as an individual, and to have his or her individual preferences taken into account and treated with respect
- to continue his or her cultural and religious practices, and to keep the language of his or her choice, without discrimination
- to select and maintain social and personal relationships with anyone else without fear, criticism or restriction
- to freedom of speech
- to maintain his or her personal independence
- to accept personal responsibility for his or her own actions and choices, even though these may involve an element of risk, because the care recipient has the right to accept the risk and not to have the risk used as a ground for preventing or restricting his or her actions and choices
- to maintain control over, and to continue making decisions about, the personal aspects of his or her daily life, financial affairs and possessions
- to be involved in the activities, associations and friendships of his or her choice, both within and outside the residential care service
- to have access to services and activities available generally in the community
- to be consulted on, and to choose to have input into, decisions about the living arrangements of the residential care service
- to have access to information about his or her rights, care, accommodation and any other information that relates to the care recipient personally

- to complain and to take action to resolve disputes
- to have access to advocates and other avenues of redress
- to be free from reprisal, or a well-founded fear of reprisal, in any form for taking action to enforce his or her rights.

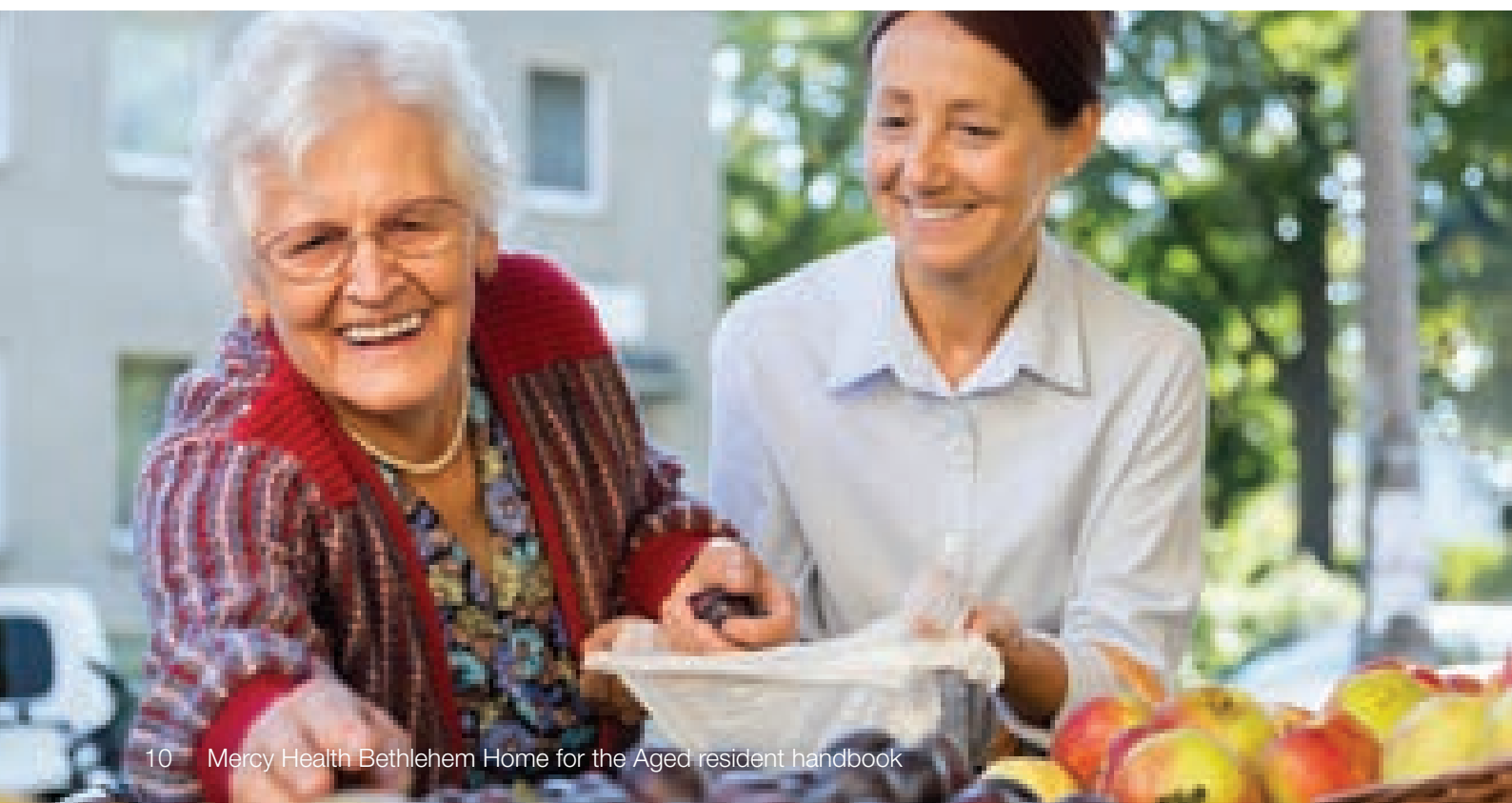
Each care recipient has the responsibility:

- to respect the rights and needs of other people within the residential care service, and to respect the needs of the residential care service community as a whole
- to respect the rights of staff to work in an environment free from harassment
- to care for his or her own health and wellbeing, as far as he or she is capable
- to inform his or her medical practitioner, as far as he or she is able, about his or her relevant medical history and current state of health.

Withdrawing and ending your agreement

If you decide you would like to leave our home you have the right to withdraw and terminate your agreement. We need a minimum seven days' written notice advising that you are leaving. If you do not give us seven days' notice we may charge you for this seven-day period.

If you decide to leave, or if you pass away while you are part of the Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged community, we will continue to charge our care fees until your room is vacated. While we do not place a timeframe on collecting your belongings, we do ask that you and/or your loved ones aim to collect them within a few days of vacating.



Moving in

Your Resident Liaison Officer

Your Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) will support you to adjust to your new home with ease. They are the first point of contact for you and your family on any general queries about your care and services. Your care staff can help you make contact with your RLO at any time.

Please see the *Who to Contact* guide in your welcome pack for your RLO's details.

Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged opened in 1965 to cater for 120 residents.

Our home is just 5km from the centre of Bendigo, close to public transport and St John of God Hospital.

A bus service stops at the front door and connects you to the many attractions of Bendigo.



What we provide

Your room is tastefully fitted with comfortable furniture specifically designed for the aged care environment and meets occupational health and safety standards. We supply your bed, bed linen, standard armchair, bedside table and over-bed table, and you are welcome to bring other furniture if it meets the same requirements.

Our communal areas encourage social interaction, independence and activity with others in your community, including family and friends. These purpose-designed areas include the chapel, seating nooks, kitchenettes, activity areas, dining areas, libraries, lounges and gardens and provide spaces where you can enjoy many varied activities.

Keeping your room safe and comfortable

To ensure all your furniture is safe, any items you wish to bring with you to Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged need to undergo a risk assessment and be approved by your Service Manager. Your room needs to be furnished in a way that does not impede your care staff. If the room becomes a health and safety risk for you or staff, we may need to ask you, your family or your representative to remove unsafe furniture. We recommend your bed is positioned in the middle of your room, away from walls and power points, to allow for easy access.

If you choose to have a refrigerator in your room, please defrost it regularly and ensure food stored in it has not passed its 'best before' date. If at any stage you need help to meet these requirements we will discuss your options with you and your family. They may include removing the fridge for your safety or providing a regular monitoring service for a set fee.

Picture hanging

If you would like to display a picture or painting please ask your care staff to arrange for maintenance staff to hang it for you. Due to wiring located within the walls, we ask that you do not drill holes in walls to hang pictures.

What to bring

To minimise the chance of your clothing being misplaced, please clearly label individual articles of clothing. We can provide and apply name labels for a very reasonable price, or you may prefer to purchase woven labels. We discourage using laundry markers as we have found the ink fades very quickly in our machines. Iron-on labels are also not recommended as they tend to peel off easily.

If you would like us to organise name labels for you, please request a clothing label order form from reception or your Resident Liaison Officer.

Valuables

Your room features a lockable drawer and we encourage you to keep your valuables locked in it at all times. We suggest you do not keep large sums of money or jewellery in your room as Mercy Health cannot be responsible for their safety.

Mercy Health also cannot be held responsible for the safety, damage or loss of your personal belongings such as mobile telephones, clothing, hearing aids, glasses or dentures. To reduce the risk of losing them, we recommend you label your personal items.

We also recommend taking out your own contents insurance policy when you join our community.

If your needs change: special support to live well

Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged is designed to ensure people can stay in the same residence for as long as they need. If your needs change over time, we aim to support you to continue living well with specialised, flexible care.

Living with dementia

We are here to support you and your loved ones if you are living with dementia. Our dementia care unit offers a safe and secure environment to reduce the risk of injury dementia symptoms can carry. While there is high demand for beds in this unit, we are committed to ensuring beds are made available to the people who most need them.

A person may be admitted to the dementia care unit only if they have a cognitive disorder that prevents them from making sound decisions.

They may also be at risk of:

- injuring themselves by wandering outside the building
- injuring themselves by wandering onto roads
- distressing others by wandering into their rooms
- falling down stairs
- behaving in ways that may distress others.

To ensure dementia care beds are available to those who most need them, it is important to understand that once a person no longer poses a risk to either themselves or others, they may be transferred back to the general area of our home.

Before we decide to move a person from or to the dementia care unit, we will consult with their family to ensure this is the appropriate decision. We may also consult the person's medical practitioner when appropriate.

Your room and security of tenure

Our home strives to offer you the security and comfort of 'ageing in place'. This means that if your care needs change, we aim to ensure you can continue to live at Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged.

This may mean you may need to consider relocating rooms from time to time. For example, if you need higher care at any time, we may recommend that you move to a more secure part of our home. Any move will only be made after we discuss it with you, your loved ones or representative and/or your medical practitioner, where appropriate.

Everyday living at Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged

Bed linen

We provide and launder all your bed linen. You are also welcome to bring in your own favourite quilt or blanket but this will need to be laundered by family.

Electrical appliances

Mercy Health has a policy to ensure all electrical equipment is checked regularly for safety. This includes annual testing and tagging of appliances to meet Australian Standards.

You are welcome to bring electrical equipment with you as long as it is approved as electrically safe by a qualified electrician and tagged accordingly. Items under guarantee are exempt; however, we will need a copy of the guarantee. Mercy Health will then have the item checked annually for electrical safety at a small cost to you. If a tested item needs to be repaired, you will be responsible for having it repaired or replaced.

If the item is found to be unsafe, we will need to remove it from use until it is repaired or replaced. For safety reasons, some electrical items cannot be brought into our home. These include electric blow heaters and electric blankets.

You can bring power boards with a safety cut-off switch and individual on/off switches, as long as they have been approved under Australian standards. Power boards approved by Mercy Health are the Arlec outlet power boards with approval number V05394 and model numbers PB44, PB44K3, PB44T and PB45. Please note that double adaptors are also not permitted as they do not meet safety standards.



Feedback

Complaints and/or suggestions

We welcome your suggestions and/or complaints and view these as opportunities to improve your care. We aim to resolve complaints and disputes about care, amenities or financial arrangements within our home as quickly as possible.

Internal process

There are several ways in which you and your representatives can provide feedback. These include:

- providing feedback to staff
- completing a feedback form
- meeting with your Service Manager.

In many cases we may be able to resolve the matter immediately. You can find forms and secure boxes throughout your home.

Feedback form

The feedback form is a way for you to share with us suggestions about how to improve life at your home. All suggestions are welcome and will be forwarded to the most appropriate department for consideration. They will also be discussed at our regular quality meetings and we will let you know the outcome as soon as possible. We manage all complaints confidentially and respect your privacy at all times. Complaints are managed by the Service Manager and may be forwarded to the relevant department manager for follow up.

Confidentiality

You may choose to place your suggestion or complaint in one of the provided envelopes. You may also choose to remain anonymous, but if you choose this option, we will not be able to give you a response.

We encourage you to let your care staff know about any issues you wish to raise. In many cases we may be able to resolve them immediately. People involved in resolving a matter might include your Resident Liaison Officer, Service Manager and Clinical Care Manager/Coordinator, as well as you and/or a family member. If we cannot resolve an issue together, you or we may escalate it to the Operations Director/State Manager Residential Aged Care.

If you would prefer to speak directly to your Service Manager, please contact reception to make an appointment time.

External process

If you wish, you may refer your complaint to:

Aged Care Complaints Commissioner

GPO Box 9848

Melbourne 3000

Phone: 1800 550 552.

If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450.

Housekeeping

We clean your room daily. If you see a 'WET FLOOR' sign at the doorway, we ask that you do not enter your room until the sign is removed, as there is a risk of falling.

The blinds are cleaned on a rotating basis, as are cupboards, walls and windows. The bathrooms and toilets are cleaned each day and as necessary.

If you find a bathroom or toilet is not clean throughout the day, please let a staff member know and they will arrange for it to be cleaned.

Storing chemicals in your room

A chemical register is kept at all Mercy Health homes. Our experienced staff choose chemicals to ensure the highest level of safety. Please check with your Service Manager before you bring any chemicals into your home.

Maintenance

Please let staff know if you notice any maintenance requirements so they can record them in the maintenance register. You will find maintenance request forms throughout the home and at the main reception and you can leave them with reception staff. Maintenance requests are attended to in a priority order.

Occasionally maintenance requests may require an external tradesperson, so repairs may take extra time to complete.

Parking

Visitor parking is located on site and disabled parking spaces are available. Please do not park in the Drop Off/Pick Up area.

Telephone

If your room has a telephone point and you would like to have a telephone connected to your room, please ask reception to arrange this for you.

Telephone charges will be added to your monthly account.

Visitors

Your family and friends are welcome to visit at any time, as we do not have any set visiting hours. Please encourage them to join in activities and programs and share meals with you whenever you wish. (See *Dining in* on page 18 for more details).

We do ask that your visitors consider the need for people to have enough rest by visiting during 'sociable' hours where possible. We aim to ensure you live in a safe, friendly, welcoming home that promotes the values of Mercy Health: compassion, hospitality, respect, innovation, stewardship and teamwork.

This is why we ask all visitors to:

- sign in using the visitor register when arriving
- sign out using the visitor register when leaving
- be courteous, respectful and considerate to everyone in our community.

We will not accept the following behaviour:

- verbal abuse, such as yelling and swearing
- physical abuse or violence of any kind
- bullying, harassment or intimidation
- risky behaviour that may cause harm to self or others
- intoxication
- disrespecting others' privacy
- entering areas marked as 'staff only'.

Mercy Health will require visitors who engage in unacceptable behaviour to leave our home. Police may be called if visitors refuse to leave at our request or pose a risk to others.

Volunteers

Volunteers can enrich your living experience and support you in many different ways. If you know someone who would like to be a volunteer, please contact the Lifestyle and Volunteer Coordinator. You will find their contact details in the *Who to Contact* guide at the front of your welcome pack.

Please be aware that by law, all volunteers must undergo a police check before becoming a volunteer in any aged care home. You can find further information in the *Mercy Health Volunteer Handbook* at reception.

Services, amenities and activities

Activities

We invite you to enjoy a range of social, cultural and physical activities and to suggest any we do not currently offer. Our lifestyle team will ensure that you can pursue your interests wherever possible and continue actively participating in life.

Music appreciation, exercise and art classes are among a wide range of leisure and lifestyle activities available for you to enjoy. Some activities may incur a charge.

Alcohol

You are welcome to have alcohol in your room, but we encourage you to drink moderately and remember that it may have adverse effects when combined with some medications. On special occasions we may provide alcohol for your enjoyment. You or your family must purchase all other requirements.

Bringing food into your home

All food brought into Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged needs to be recorded in the register at the front entrance.

Chaplaincy and pastoral care

Pastoral care is an integral part of Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged. Our Pastoral Care Associate offers you and your loved ones spiritual and emotional support whenever you need it.

They will coordinate any prayer groups and church services, including regular Mass, sacramental care and denominational services. Denominational chaplains can also visit to worship with you; simply speak to our Pastoral Care Associate. You will find your contact details in the *Who to Contact* guide at the front of your welcome pack.

Diet

We are happy to meet special dietary needs you may have, whether for religious, cultural, ethical or medical reasons.

Dining in

You have many dining options to choose from every day. You can choose from the main kitchen's menu, which changes daily, and enjoy your meal in the dining room, or eat in your room.

All food is freshly prepared and cooked on site. Our nutritionally balanced menu is developed with advice from a dietitian and is changed seasonally.

Your visitors are welcome to enjoy a meal here with you at a small cost. Please give our staff at least 12 hours' notice before dining to allow us to prepare an extra meal/s. When you first arrive at Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged, you will receive a complimentary voucher for two guests to enjoy a meal in our home.

Gardens and outdoor spaces

Our home is designed to give you plenty of opportunities to walk, relax and socialise outdoors. There are two internal courtyards for you to enjoy.

Hairdressing

We have an on-site hairdresser available for your convenience. To make an appointment please contact reception (the extension number and days of work are included in your *Who to Contact* guide at the front of your welcome pack).

You can use cash to pay hairdressers directly, or charge the service to your Mercy Health invoice.



Holidays

We encourage you to stay socially connected with your friends, family and the community, and to maintain your interests outside our home. We kindly ask that you notify a staff member and complete the outing register when leaving your home.

You are welcome to take holidays away from your home for up to 52 days per year. The usual residential fees will apply during your time away.

Laundry

Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged has an on-site laundry, to wash your clothing and towels.

Delicate and woollen items are not suitable for our washing machines so they should be washed by a friend or family member or dry cleaned. We can put you in touch with external dry cleaning services if you need them.

Library

We have two small libraries on site with books rotated every three or four months. Residents are also able to borrow from a local library that visits the home every three weeks.

Mail

We will deliver all daily incoming mail to you.

You can leave outgoing mail at reception and we will mail it for you.

Outings

We warmly encourage you to maintain friendships and interests outside our home.

Please ensure you let a staff member know whenever you leave our home, even for a walk, and complete the outing register with the times you expect to be away. This enables staff to account for everyone in our community in an emergency. You will find the outing register near each entrance.

If you plan to go on an outing or shopping and need support, we can arrange for a staff member to accompany you. Please speak to our reception staff or your Resident Liaison Officer who can organise this and advise you of the fee.

Pets

Pets are welcome to visit our home. From time to time we may also arrange for pets to visit our home. We have a pet cavoodle called Lexie visit every weekday from 8am-4pm and a cat called Tammy who lives here permanently.

To keep everyone safe, we ask that pets are well controlled by their owner at all times and kept away from areas where food is being prepared or eaten.

If we have any concerns about the pet we may ask its owner not to bring it into our home.

Resident forums

Our home hosts a regular resident forum that promotes open communication for ideas and dialogue. The forums can help us work with others in your community to identify opportunities for improvement. Your loved ones and representatives are very welcome to attend. Occasionally our staff may address the meeting to update everyone on important issues.

Meeting dates are displayed in each wing and everyone will receive copies of minutes. If your loved one would like an emailed copy, please give their email address to reception staff. You can also request a copy from our Lifestyle Coordinator.

Smoking

All Mercy Health facilities are smoke-free environments. We do not permit smoking in any indoor areas. If you choose to smoke, you will be assessed regularly for your safety.

Transport

You will find timetables for bus services at reception. Please remember to complete the outing register and advise staff before you leave our home.





Looking after your health

Daily care: working together to support your health

It is very important that your care meets your needs and your choices every day. We work with you to develop a care plan tailored to your preferences, abilities, and health and support requirements.

We will develop the plan by discussing your needs and choices with you and any family members or carers who know you well and may have been helping you at home.

We will also ask whether you have any special wishes relating to your care and spiritual needs if your health deteriorates.

We recognise that sometimes people may decline care or choose to do things that may put their health or safety at risk. We will discuss your choices with you and/or your family to make sure you clearly understand any associated risks, as well as any other less risky options you may have to support you.

Doctor's appointments

We encourage you to retain your own general practitioner as long as they can continue visiting you at our home.

As part of your admission process, we will have asked you to obtain your doctor's agreement to provide your medical care while you are living here. If your doctor cannot continue your care, we can provide the phone number for the Division of General Practice in Bendigo so you or your family can contact them.

Most doctors visit on a monthly basis or more often if required. If you become ill, we will contact your doctor. If they are unavailable, we will contact an alternative doctor on your behalf. If necessary, you will be transferred to hospital via ambulance and

we will call your primary contact person as quickly as possible.

Exercise

As you get older, it becomes even more important to remain active. There are lots of ways you can get active and it's not just about exercising.

Physical activity that gets the body moving can include anything from walking and gardening to playing sport.

Medications and pharmacy

Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged has an agreement with a local pharmacy to provide a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week service to supply medication to our home. Please see the *Who to Contact* guide in your welcome pack for details.

If you prefer to continue using your current pharmacy, please discuss this with your Resident Liaison Officer.

If you choose to self-administer your medication, we will need to regularly check that you are still safe to do so. You will need to keep all your medications locked in the drawer/safe in your room.

Organising your specialist medical appointments

If you need someone to accompany you to external medical appointments, please ask a relative or friend. Unfortunately we cannot accompany you. If your family or friends are unable to help, we can use an agency to arrange for a carer to accompany you, at your own cost. Please speak to our reception staff or your Resident Liaison Officer who can organise a carer and confirm the fee.

Preventing falls and harm from falls

As we age, our risk of having a fall increases. We will assess your risk of falling and formulate a care plan for you. It is important you let staff know if you have a fall.

One of the ways you can decrease your risk of falls is by wearing 'safe' shoes.

Safe footwear has:

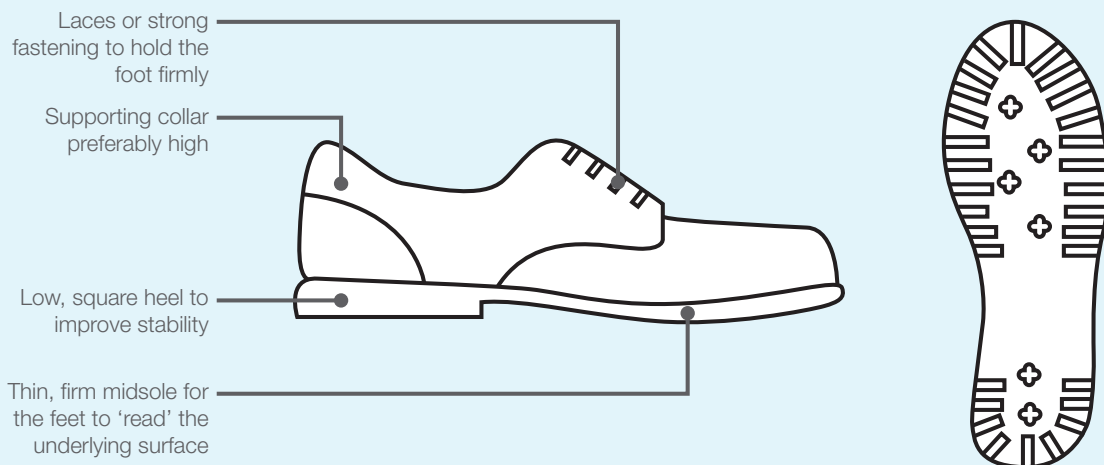
- thin, firm soles, preferably with a tread to help prevent slips
- low, square heels to improve stability
- a supporting collar (ankle support) to improve stability
- fixation across the front of the foot: laces, buckles, Velcro. These stop the foot from slipping out of the shoe when walking.

Reference: Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare (2009) Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Residential Aged Care Facilities

It is particularly important to look at the type of slippers you are wearing. Scuff type slippers increase falls risk significantly because they provide no support for the foot and also create a trip hazard when they become loose. Please feel free to ask staff or the podiatrist for advice on buying slippers and shoes.

Another way to decrease your risk, and the risk to other people, is to have a clutter-free room. Clutter can create trip hazards. Other things such as your call bell cords and extension cords are also trip hazards.

What makes a shoe safe?



Bed poles

Some residents find that they need, or would prefer, a bed pole to help them move around in bed. It is very important to use the correct type of bed pole; if clothing gets caught in it, this can lead to strangulation. A physiotherapist will assess your need for a bed pole and recommend the most appropriate type. If your family wishes to supply your bed pole, it must be assessed by the staff, and marked as approved, before you begin using it. If a non-approved bed pole is being used, we will need to remove it until it has been assessed to ensure your safety.

Setting up a care plan

About eight weeks after you have settled into Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged, a member of our care team will invite you and/or your chosen representative to develop your care plan. Your care plan will be reviewed regularly with you or your chosen representative at agreed intervals to ensure it continues to reflect your needs.

Skin care

As we grow older our skin changes. This can lead to an increased risk of bruising and tearing. Some things you can do to protect your skin include:

- have the water temperature warm rather than hot when showering or in the bath
- avoid soap, especially those that are strongly perfumed
- use a body wash with a neutral pH
- after a shower/bath pat dry your skin, don't rub it

- use a moisturiser on your skin; a good moisturiser should have sunscreen and be low in perfumes, dyes and additives
- drink enough water, which can help hydrate your skin. The recommended amount of water to be consumed daily is at least eight glasses (unless on fluid restrictions)
- avoid drinking coffee and alcohol.

Clothing

We recommend wearing loose fitting clothes. They are easier to take on and off and won't pull on the skin and cause skin tears. There are many clothing companies that provide adaptive clothing for older men and women who have problems with moving or using their hands.

Pressure injuries

Another risk that increases as we age is the development of pressure injuries (bed sores). A pressure injury is an area of localised damage to the skin and underlying tissue caused by pressure or friction. Pressure injuries commonly form in areas such as heels, the bony part of the ankle and the bone at the base of the spine. However, they can develop on other parts of the body as well (hips, elbows, knees, shoulderblades, ears, and back of head).

Your risk increases if you are confined to a bed or chair, cannot move by yourself or have poor nutrition. You can help lower the risk by doing the following.

- Inspect your skin:
 - Inspect your skin at least once a day (ask one of the staff to inspect difficult-to-see areas for you). Pay special attention to reddened areas that remain after you have changed positions and the pressure has been relieved.

- Protect your skin:

Avoid massage of your skin over bony parts of the body. This can damage the tissues under the skin and make you more likely to get pressure injuries.

- Move:

Limit pressure by changing positions frequently. If you are in bed, change position at least every two hours; if in a chair, at least every hour.

- Use preventative equipment:

Pillows or wedges can be used to keep knees or ankles from touching each other.

Avoid lying on your hip bone when lying on your side.

If possible (subject to medical conditions) do not raise the head of your bed too much. This will reduce the 'sliding down' motion which can damage skin and underlying blood vessels.

- Eat well:

Eat a well-balanced diet. Protein and calories are very important.

Drink adequate fluids.

- Increase your activity:

You may be seen by a physiotherapist to enhance your activity levels and mobility.

Please ask staff if you have any questions about preventing pressure injuries.

Staying well with extra health services

If you need physiotherapy, podiatry, speech therapy or nutritional advice, local allied health therapists can provide services in our home. Giving you a choice of flexible and individualised care options, these extra services can help you maintain your general health and wellbeing.

If you are generally well and would like to use these services, or seek extra allied health support, you can arrange for your preferred therapists to visit on a fee-for-service basis. In many cases our allied health therapists may be able to see you privately. To book allied health services, please discuss your needs with the Clinical Team Leaders or Clinical Manager.

Warm weather precautions

Some medications affect the body's ability to deal with the sun's ultra-violet rays, which can cause damage to skin, eyes and immunity. It is important to wear sunscreen and a hat when you are outdoors. In the warmer weather dehydration is common in older people. It occurs when the body has lost too much fluid and electrolytes, which regulate temperature and a healthy fluid balance. It is important to drink plenty of fluids (water).

Your safety and wellbeing

Elder abuse and mandatory reporting

Elder abuse is any act occurring within a relationship where there is an implication of trust which results in harm to an older person. Elder abuse can include physical, verbal, psychological, financial, sexual and social abuse and/or neglect (Department of Social Service: Prevention of Elder Abuse).

Mercy Health does not tolerate abuse of any kind to residents and has processes in place to reduce the risk of abuse occurring. These include mandatory police checks of staff and volunteers before and during employment, ongoing staff training and responsible rostering.

We encourage you to report any concerns you have about your wellbeing or safety. If you experience or observe any form of abuse we encourage you to discuss the issue with the Registered Nurse in charge or our Service Manager.

If you do not feel comfortable raising a concern with staff or management, you can contact the Aged Care Complaints Commissioner toll free on 1800 550 552.

We treat all concerns about elder abuse very seriously and will follow up any reports of abuse. We will comply with the requirements of compulsory reporting required by approved providers of aged care for incidents of alleged unlawful sexual contact and unreasonable use of force or assault.

Emergency procedures

Evacuation policy

All emergency responses are under the strict control of the Emergency Coordinator, who is identifiable by their fluorescent orange Emergency Officer vest. The Emergency

Coordinator is the most senior staff member on site at the time of the emergency. Out of hours, this will be the Registered Nurse.

Fire suppression equipment (sprinklers and extinguishers), fire detection systems, emergency lighting and illuminated exit signs, and emergency communication systems are in place throughout our home.

Evacuation is normally conducted in stages after the **CODE ORANGE** is announced.

STAGE 1 – IMMEDIATE AREA

Staff will remove person/s at risk in the immediate area if safe to do so.

STAGE 2 – SAME LEVEL DIFFERENT SMOKE COMPARTMENT

The home is divided into fire zones and each zone is divided by a smoke or fire door. Staff will direct person/s to the nearest unaffected zone.

Fire Safety Incident Response Management

We have fire evacuation maps located around the home.

Bushfire evacuations

Because Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged is located in a high-risk bushfire area, we have an increased focus on emergency preparedness during the bushfire season. Mercy Health's management works closely with the relevant experts as well as state emergency services and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) to control risk.

Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged will activate its response when a Code Red Fire Danger rating is called. In the event of a predicted Code Red day, our home will commence monitoring and preparedness activities to 'shelter in place'.

These plans are designed to ensure you remain as safe as possible during bushfire season.

Infection control

Keeping our home as healthy as possible is important for everyone. If a loved one is planning to visit but is feeling unwell, we recommend they postpone their visit until they are completely well. Many people in our home are living with lowered immune systems and we want to protect their wellbeing as well as yours.

We provide antibacterial hand gel throughout our home for your convenience. We ask that your visitors use it when they enter and leave our home to prevent the spread of infection. We also ask that you and your visitors wash your hands thoroughly and cover your mouths when you cough or sneeze.

If infectious illnesses such as gastro or influenza affect our home we need to go into 'lock down'. This means we advise people not to visit, to contain the infection and minimise its spread to the community. During these times we will place notices on the front door. We may also notify your family by phone.

Preventing infections

It is important that people who are sick with cold or flu practise good cough and sneeze etiquette. However, infections can be transmitted even before symptoms let you know you're sick. So even when you're healthy, it's important to practise proper cough and sneeze etiquette.

- Cover your mouth and nose every time you cough or sneeze. Use a disposable tissue if possible.

- If no tissue is available, use your upper sleeve. This prevents your hands becoming contaminated with viruses.
- Dispose of single-use tissues immediately after you cough or sneeze. Try to ensure a waste bin is available so that tissues can be disposed of, or use a plastic bag to store them until a bin is available.
- If you cough or sneeze onto a hard surface like a table, clean it immediately with a disposable disinfectant wipe.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 15–20 seconds every time you cough or sneeze, and when you touch a contaminated object like a tissue. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitiser.

Insurance

We recommend taking out your own contents insurance policy when you join our community.

Safety and security

Your safety is paramount, so we have installed key pads and other security devices in some parts of the building. This controls who can access unauthorised and potentially dangerous areas. These areas may include commercial kitchens, laundries, plant rooms/enclosures and areas marked as restricted.

In other areas, you will need to enter a code into a key pad to open doors (for example, the main entrance doors). By accepting a place at Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged, you are also accepting the use of our security devices.

Fees and accounts

Fees for your care

The Australian Government's Department of Health determines residential daily care charges in accordance with the *Aged Care Act (1997)*.

Centrelink or the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) will advise residents of their combined assets and income assessment. Centrelink or DVA will also advise the Department of Health of the combined assets and income assessment of each resident.

The Department of Health will then advise Mercy Health of both the maximum fees chargeable to, and the subsidies payable for, each resident. The Department will then advise residents of the fees payable.

Paying fees and out-of-pocket expenses

Your fees are payable monthly in advance by direct debit and you will receive a statement every month. You can find out more about fees and your account by calling Aged Care Finance on 1300 883 360.

You or your chosen representative may need to pay for some services, such as hairdressing, dry cleaning, or extra health services, as you use them. To find out more, please ask your Resident Liaison Officer.





Your personal details, privacy and legal information

Contact person

When you choose to live at Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged, you will need to nominate a primary contact person. This is the person we will contact if there is any change in your condition or you need to be transferred to hospital. Your primary contact will be the first person we call, and it will then be that person's responsibility to contact other people as appropriate.

If your contact person's details change

You will need to ensure your primary contact person's details are kept up to date, including their address and phone numbers. Please let your Resident Liaison Officer know if any of these details change.

We would also appreciate knowing if your primary contact person will be away for any extended periods, so that in an emergency we can contact another appropriate person.

Justice of the Peace

Under Mercy Health's policies our staff cannot witness or sign legal documents. Please ask our administration staff where you can find the nearest Justice of the Peace.

Legal documents and wills

It is important to have a will so that your estate is distributed in the way you wish. We appreciate being advised of your executor's contact details when you arrive at our home. This information is important to enable the repayment of any monies owing to your estate.

Funeral arrangements

Many people and their families have preferences about their funeral arrangements. While we understand this can be difficult to consider, letting us know who you wish to choose as funeral director can make arrangements much easier for your loved ones.

Please also let us know if you have any specific cultural or religious needs.

Powers of attorney

Powers of attorney can help you simplify how your personal affairs are managed. Many people need a power of attorney that continues in effect (or takes effect) if they lose capacity for any reason. This is called an 'enduring power of attorney' and it remains in place until you pass away.

You can also make a general (in some cases called a 'non-enduring') power of attorney, which remains in place only while you have the capacity to make decisions for yourself. Below is a brief outline of the types of decisions that need to be made on your behalf. Mercy Health strongly recommends you seek independent legal advice to choose the most appropriate arrangement for your individual circumstances.

Medical decisions

You can appoint someone to act on your behalf in matters of your comfort, dignity and treatment during critical or terminal illness, and certain medical treatment.

Financial decisions

You can appoint someone to act on your behalf in financial matters, such as property, money, or investments. The attorney may be a family member or someone you trust to maintain your affairs in your best interests.

Personal decisions

You can appoint a person to make personal decisions on your behalf, such as where you will live. Again, the attorney may be a family member or someone else you trust to make personal decisions on your behalf.

Supportive attorney

A supportive attorney is a person you appoint to assist you in making decisions. It is similar to but not the same as a power of attorney. You can authorise the supportive attorney to collect information for you, communicate a decision you have made, or take steps to put your decision into effect. The person can be a family member or someone you trust to help you make decisions in your best interest.

Please note

A power of attorney is a legal document. You may wish to seek legal advice to ensure that any power of attorney you make is valid.

Mercy Health can only action a valid power of attorney once a copy has been received. It should be a certified copy.

The *Residential Care Application* requests a copy of any powers of attorney you currently have in place. If at any stage you appoint a new power of attorney, Mercy Health will need copies of the new arrangements.

Guardianship

If you are unable to make reasonable decisions for yourself, and have not appointed a power of attorney, a tribunal may appoint a guardian or public trustee to make decisions on your behalf.

Resident advocacy services

If you think your rights are not being respected you can ask for support from Aged Care Advocacy. Advocacy services are community-based organisations funded by the Australian Government under the

National Aged Care Advocacy Program. Services provided are free and confidential.

In Victoria, you can contact Elder Rights Advocacy on 1800 700 600 or Seniors Rights Victoria on 1300 368 821.

Your privacy

To ensure you receive the best possible care during your time with us, we will need to collect information about you and your health status. This information is then shared with your care team, with all details remaining strictly confidential.

Please read the *Mercy Health Your Privacy* brochure in your folder for details about our privacy policy.

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal	Telephone	Website
55 King Street Melbourne Vic 3000 Office hours: 9am to 4.30pm Monday-Friday	Toll Free (STD Calls): 1800 135 055 Phone: 9628 9911	vcat.vic.gov.au

Terms you may hear at Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged

Care plan

A plan written by you and your care team that sets out the kind of care you want and need, and the way you choose to receive it. This may include things like your medical care, allied health (for example physiotherapy, massage and dietary advice) and activities or programs that are especially important to you. You and your team review your plan regularly to make sure it still meets your needs and preferences.

Model of care

Every health, aged and community care service has a model of care, which is essentially a philosophy that guides the kind of care it provides. Our model of care has one aim: to ensure you can have the best day possible, each and every day.

You have your own copy of our model of care in your welcome pack. You can also request a copy from our Resident Liaison Officer.

Person-centred care

This simply means care that respects each person physically, emotionally and spiritually and values their unique life story.

Resident Liaison Officer

As a treasured member of the Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged community, you have a dedicated Resident Liaison Officer (RLO). Your RLO is here to make you feel completely at home and to help you with anything you may need. You will find your RLO's contact details in the *Who to Contact* guide at the front of your welcome pack.

Service Manager

Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged is run by your Service Manager. The Service Manager oversees every aspect of your home, from staffing through to programs and services. You will find your Service Manager's contact details in the *Who to Contact* guide at the front of your welcome pack.



Mercy Health Bethlehem Home for the Aged

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Mercy Health acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the first Australians. We acknowledge the diversity of Indigenous Australia. We respectfully recognise Elders both past and present. This information was produced on Wurundjeri Country.