



NEERIM DISTRICT
HEALTH SERVICE

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

The Neerim District Health Service is a private hospital offering:

- Acute and Sub-acute Medical Care
- General Surgery
- Ophthalmology / Cataract Surgery
- Plastic Surgery
- Post-Surgical Convalescence
- Endoscopy
- Aged Care
- Palliative Care



NEERIM DISTRICT SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL HOSPITAL Inc.
Trading as NEERIM DISTRICT HEALTH SERVICE

29-39 Main Road, Neerim South, Victoria 3831

Phone: (03) 5628 1226
Fax: (03) 5628 1468
Email: info@neerimhealth.org.au

www.neerimhealth.org.au



Welcome

The team at Neerim District Health Service (NDHS) would like to welcome you to our hospital.

With a long tradition of providing a high standard of care for our local community, we will endeavour to make your stay as comfortable and pleasant as possible.

The NDHS operates a community owned nursing hospital, administered by a CEO and Director of Nursing who works in conjunction with a Board of Management, consisting of elected volunteers from the local community.

Membership of the NDHS provides benefits for your family and confirms your support for a very important community owned and managed asset. Membership entitles you to cheaper outpatient facility fees, voting at the Annual General Meeting and regular NDHS News updates.

All our staff are extensively trained in the provision of quality care, and have the appropriate experience and understanding to help you.

Please talk to our staff if you have any concerns or questions during your stay.

Many of the commonly asked questions are answered in this guide, which provides information about hospital procedures and services.

Board of Management

- Geoff Neil - President
- Connie Lewis – Vice President
- Bob Southgate - Treasurer
- Leon Fewster - Member
- Greg Howson - Member
- Julie Sheehan – Member
- Paul Ford – Member

Senior Staff

- Jacqui Brown
CEO & Director of Nursing (DON)
- Kathy Irvine
Nursing Unit Manager - Ward & Aged Care
- Liz Mapleson
Nursing Unit Manager - Theatre
- Silvia Zorzer
Hotel Services Manager
- Bronwyn Radford
Administration

About Your Stay

The nurses at NDHS are all highly qualified and your well-being is of their utmost concern. Apart from liaising with your doctor and providing your daily care and treatment, nursing staff will show you the facilities in your room and advise you about your on-going treatment including your preparation for discharge.

All beds are equipped with a nurse call system. Please press the button on the handpiece if you require attention. For all administrative enquiries, office hours are 9.00am-5.00pm weekdays.

Telephones

A telephone for patient use is provided for each bed and personal mobile use is permitted.

Family and friends may contact you by ringing the hospital on (03) 5628 1226. Local calls may be made by dialling the number you wish to call and pressing the grey dial button on the left of the top row.

Calls to Mobile, STD and International calls must be booked by contacting the administration office (ext 201) during office hours or nursing staff (ext. 240) after hours.

Payments for calls (by donation) are to be made at the front office during office hours or to nursing staff after hours.

No Smoking

The hospital has a non-smoking policy. In the interests of health and safety for patients and staff, smoking is not permitted within the hospital buildings and grounds.

Visitors

Visitors are encouraged as they are important to your recovery. Visiting hours are between 10.00 am and 8.00pm. If you would like visitors outside these hours, please discuss with the nursing staff.

When visiting, we ask that consideration is shown for both the patient being visited and other patients in the hospital. It is important to keep noise to a minimum, and observe any restriction on visiting in respect to any patient. Rest is an important part of the healing process. Please understand that these restrictions are for the benefit of the patient.

Children are welcome, but must be under adult supervision at all times. We expect them to show the same respect and consideration of other patients as adults. They are not to enter any other patients' rooms, or any other rooms within the hospital.

Valuables and Personal Effects

The hospital and staff cannot accept responsibility for money, jewellery or any other valuables you may bring in to your room. We therefore advise you **NOT** to bring jewellery or large amounts of money to hospital. Whilst every endeavour will be made to look after personal items, safe keeping of items such as hearing aids, spectacles and dentures is your own responsibility. NDHS does not accept any liability for loss of personal items.



Deliveries and Mail

Flowers will be delivered to your room as they arrive.

If you receive any mail it will be brought to your room daily. The hospital's mailing address is:

Neerim District Health Service
29-39 Main Neerim Road
Neerim South Vic 3831

Mail received after discharge will be forwarded to your home address. Stamped outgoing mail can be given to nursing or administration staff.

Television

An overhead mounted remote controlled television is provided free of charge to all patients. In the interest of comfort for other patients you are requested to keep the volume at the minimum possible level or use headphones.

Newspapers

Newspapers may be purchased daily for you from the local milk-bar. Please inform administration or the nurse if you wish to use this service. There are also reading materials available for patients to borrow in the patients' sitting room.

Hairdresser/Podiatrist

Arrangements for a hairdresser or a podiatrist can be made through the nursing staff. Please note that the patient is responsible for paying the appropriate fee for these services at the time of the appointment.

Toiletries

There is no shop available within the hospital. However emergency toiletries can be purchased on your behalf (i.e. toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, tissues and shampoo). Details are available through the nursing staff.

Meals

A dietician is available to assist you if you have any special dietary requirements.

The dietician also provides a nutrition counselling (education) service and can assist you with any nutritional or special diet queries should your doctor request this service.

If you have any specific cultural, religious or ethical beliefs which affect your diet, please let staff know and we will endeavour to meet these requirements.

Meal times are:

- Breakfast 8.00am
- Morning Tea 10.30am
- Lunch 12.00pm
- Afternoon Tea 3.30pm
- Dinner 5.30pm
- Supper 8.00pm

Visitor Meals

Your visitors are welcome to eat with you during your stay. There is a charge for this service, and meals must be ordered by 10.30 am for lunch, and 4.30 pm for tea.

Please ask your nurse if you wish to order visitor meals. The meal selection is the same as for the patients and payment is to be made at time of ordering.

- Main meal: \$7.00
- Meal with soup & dessert: \$8.50
- Meal with soup OR dessert: \$7.50
- Sandwich: \$4.00
- S'wich with soup OR dessert: \$5.00
- Tea & Coffee - complimentary

Charges include GST.

Community Services

A variety of community services are offered through the Shire of Baw Baw and through West Gippsland Healthcare Group. Please discuss any need for community services with the nursing staff, such as:

- Access Services
- Aged and Disability
- Community House
- Home Help
- Immunisations
- Justice of the Peace
- Maternal, Child and Family Health
- Parenting Groups and Support
- Senior Citizens' Club

Laundry

It is expected that family or friends will attend to your laundry needs. In exceptional circumstances, the hospital can arrange to have items laundered for you for a fee.

Patient Accounts

Admission to hospital depends on the availability of the necessary services you require. It also means that you will be charged for the services you receive from the hospital, your doctor and other providers.

Payment for services (except for expenses covered by Medicare) will depend on your level of Private Health Insurance and any exclusions you have chosen on your policy.

Power of Attorney and Living Wills

If you have nominated a medical Power of Attorney or hold a Living Will or Advanced Care Directive please let us know on admission.

Veterans

NDHS is one of the few private hospitals in Victoria selected for a Tier 1 rating with the Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA).

If a patient holds a current Gold Repatriation Health Card, admission to NDHS can occur without prior approval from DVA for all admissions. Similarly, holders of White Repatriation Health Care Cards can also receive treatment at NDHS with DVA's prior approval, for those conditions that have been accepted as due to war service only. These conditions are nominated by the Department of Veteran's Affairs.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care offers spiritual and emotional support to all patients and their relatives. If you wish to speak with a minister of your religion, please inform your nurse.

Donations

NDHS is a not-for-profit private hospital. Over many years, the Hospital has received significant support from the community and relies on this to continue delivering quality care. Donations to the Hospital of \$2.00 or more are tax-deductible.

Car Parking

Free parking is available in front of the hospital. If needed, wheelchairs are available.

Patient Safety

Patient safety is our top priority.

We do this by promoting safe practices and a culture which is focussed on patient safety and reducing incidents of harm to patients.

The following information provides tips on being prepared for your stay in hospital and what you can do to avoid harm.

Infection Prevention

To ensure a healthy environment, we strongly recommend that any friends or family who are unwell avoid visiting the hospital. It is also important to inform us if you have had any recent infections or have any concerns about exposure to infection.

Hand Hygiene

Performing hand hygiene is the single most effective way to prevent spread of infections. Our staff are required to follow national guidelines regarding hand hygiene.

You have the right to ask any staff member, including medical and nursing staff if they have performed hand hygiene prior to attending to you. Patients and visitors are also reminded of the importance of cleaning their hands before and after hospital visits.

Preventing Falls

Falls can prolong a hospital stay or recovery period. Nursing staff complete a daily falls risk assessment on all patients. This assessment will enable staff to identify your risk and ensure that appropriate strategies are in place to prevent you from falling.

If you have a history of falls, please discuss this with our staff on admission.

Medications

It is vital that all medication you are currently taking is brought into hospital in their original containers and given to your admitting nurse. These will be locked in the medication locker in your room and dispensed as ordered by your doctor.

Any new medication prescribed by your doctor during your admission will be dispensed by the Neerim South Pharmacy. Depending on the health fund you are a member of, there may be a charge for this (this will be the same price that you would pay if you were making the purchase yourself).

It is important that you have instructions from your doctor regarding your medications prior to surgery, particularly if you have had one of the following:

- Fluid tablets (diuretics)
- Immuno-suppressants or steroids
- Blood pressure tablets
- Anticoagulant/antithrombotics
e.g. Warfarin, Clopidogrel, Persantin or Aspirin
- NSAIDS (anti-inflammatory drugs)
e.g. Diclofenac or Naproxen
- Glaucoma eye drops
- Anti-Parkinson's medications

Prior to discharge, the nursing staff will ensure you have adequate medication to take home. This may require sending scripts to pharmacy for which you will receive an invoice from the pharmacy. Any outstanding scripts will be returned to you.

Allergies to Medications

It is vital that you inform your doctor if you have had any allergies or previous reactions to medications, food or latex etc. and the severity of that reaction.



Safe Skin Program

Most patients who have surgery recover without complications. Sometimes patients can get infections after surgery. Here are some tips to help you and your family lower the risk of infection after surgery. The day and night before surgery:

- Do not shave near where you will be having your surgery. Shaving can irritate the skin which may lead to infections. If you are a man that shaves your face every day, please ask your surgeon if this is ok to do so.
- Take a bath or shower the night before and the morning of your surgery. This helps decrease your chances of getting an infection.
- Use a fresh bar or liquid antibacterial soap when you bath or shower.
- Wet your body and wash with soap and a clean wash cloth.
- Rinse well; it is important to get all the soap off your body.
- Dry well with a clean towel.
- Put on clean clothes
- Do not use lotions, creams or powders on your skin.

Sleep Apnoea

It is essential to inform your surgeon, anaesthetist and pre-admission staff if you have been diagnosed with sleep apnoea. If you have been provided with a CPAP machine you must bring this with you to hospital.

Blood Transfusions

Some patients will require blood transfusions during their hospital stay either as part of major surgery or ongoing medical treatment. Blood is supplied by the Australian Red Cross Blood Service which has strict screening protocols for donors.

Pressure Ulcers

Pressure ulcers occur when there is unrelieved pressure on an area of skin resulting in damage. These ulcers can be very difficult to heal and can prolong your hospital stay. Please advise the staff on admission if you have any wounds or ulcers. By communicating this information, we can ensure that you receive appropriate wound care throughout your admission.

Preventing Blood Clots

Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) and Pulmonary Embolism (PE) are blood clots that can form in the leg or lung. Both of these conditions can occur in a hospitalised patient and can cause long term complications.

We have a program in place focussed on the prevention of blood clots. You will be assessed on admission and regularly throughout your stay. This assessment will form the basis for preventative treatment.

The treatment is ordered in collaboration with your doctor and can involve medications and pressure relieving stocking.

Please advise staff on admission if you have a history of blood clots.

Fire Safety

The Hospital has fire safety procedures in which each staff member has a key role.

Regular fire and safety drills are conducted in the hospital, and all staff members participate. They are aware of the appropriate response to any emergency situation.

IF YOU SEE OR SMELL FIRE OR SMOKE, REPORT IT IMMEDIATELY TO A STAFF MEMBER.

Rights & Responsibilities

The Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights recognises that people receiving health care and people providing health care all have important parts to play in achieving healthcare rights. It allows patients, consumers, families, carers and health services to work together towards a safe and high quality healthcare system through mutual understanding. As a patient, you have a right to expect:

- Access - a right to access healthcare
- Safety - a right to receive safe and high quality health care
- Respect - a right to be shown respect, and to be treated with dignity and consideration
- Communication – a right to be informed about services, treatment, options and costs in a clear and open way
- Participation – a right to be included in decisions and to make choices about your health care
- Privacy – a right to privacy and confidentiality of your personal information
- Comment – a right to comment on your health care, and to have your concerns addressed

As a patient you also have responsibilities. We ask that you are considerate of the rights and needs of other patients, visitors and staff.

You are responsible for:

- Providing the necessary information to your doctor and hospital staff to enable them to provide the care and treatment necessary for you
- Cooperate in the process of the provision of care and to report any changes in your condition to the nursing staff or your doctor
- Abiding by the policies and procedures of the hospital

Privacy Act

NDHS is committed to maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information.

We are required by legislation to maintain appropriate medical records on all matters relating to your illness and treatment. Your records are treated as confidential by all staff. Only those who have direct responsibility for your care can access these records, and they are stored at all times in the appropriate, limited access or locked areas.

Relatives or friends inquiring regarding your admission or condition are given only general information. Your privacy is respected and you have the right to determine who should be informed of your condition. You can nominate those whom you wish to be fully informed of your condition (for example your husband or wife, an adult child or a parent).

A brochure outlining the Privacy Act, Victoria 2000 and the Health Records Act, Victoria 2001 is available in your bedside locker.

Meeting Patient Needs

Your feedback about our care and services is important to us. We appreciate and welcome your comments and compliments. We use this information to help us review and improve our services. To ensure we are meeting your needs, we also ask for feedback through regular patient satisfaction surveys. If you are given a survey on admission, we ask that you complete and return it to the hospital after you are discharged. All surveys are conducted with the utmost confidentiality.

If you have an urgent or important issue, we ask that you bring this to our attention as soon as possible. The hospital expects all staff to provide the highest level of care and service at all times. To ensure we maintain these high standards, any person concerned by the care or attention they have received is encouraged to discuss their complaint.

Resolving Complaints

- 1) Complaints may be made either verbally or in writing.
- 2) Complaints should be directed to the CEO/Director of Nursing.
- 3) The CEO/Director of Nursing will speak to all parties concerned in an attempt to resolve the matter.
- 4) If not resolved, we will refer you to the Health Services Commissioner who handles unresolved health services complaints.

Health Services Commissioner
Complaints and Information
Phone: 300 582 113
E-mail: hsc@health.vic.gov.au
Mail: Level 26
570 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Discharge

We aim to make your transition from the Hospital to your home as smooth as possible.

Patients are usually discharged between 10.00 and 11.00am.

We will assist you to plan for your discharge at the time of your admission. Home services will be arranged where necessary.

Before you leave, you will be provided with information relating to your medications, appointments and discharge instructions as appropriate.

Any follow up appointments with your doctor, physiotherapists or other health care providers will be attended to by the nursing staff, and appropriate discharge arrangements will be organised in consultation with you and your family members.

We ask that you attend to all your hospital and pharmacy accounts upon your discharge.

Discharge Checklist

- Confirm your discharge time
- Make arrangements for transport home the day prior to discharge
- Pick up all medications, x-rays, scans and appointment cards
- Attend to hospital and pharmacy accounts
- Collect all discharge information and equipment for home nursing
- Pack and check room for personal belongings

**Thank you for choosing
Neerim District Health Service**

How it all began

The Victorian Bush Nursing Association was formed in 1910 and in 1914, a Bush Nursing Centre was established at Neerim.

A public meeting was held in the Neerim South hall on 29 September 1926, at which the desirability of establishing a Bush Nursing Hospital in Neerim South was affirmed. A Committee of Management was formed on 23 November of the same year.



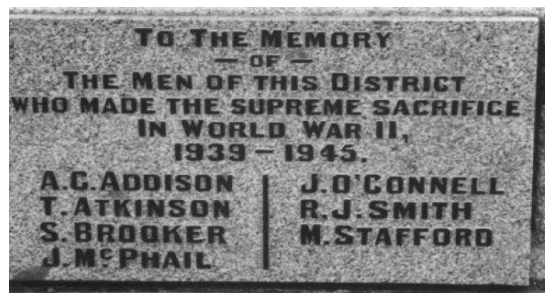
In January 1927, a site in Neerim East Road was purchased for twenty pounds (\$40) which was financed through public subscriptions and the result of local fund raising activities.

A total of eight hundred and thirteen pounds (\$1,626) was spent on the construction of the hospital building which was officially opened on 11 February 1928.

The hospital was then named the Neerim District Soldiers' Memorial Hospital.

Prior to establishment of the hospital, the only medical service was a Nursing Centre at Neerim Junction which was staffed by District Nurses. This centre was established in 1912 and subsequently closed in 1931 as the services of the hospital exceeded those offered by the Nursing Centre.

Community support for the hospital was strong and this was evidenced by vigorous fund-raising activities including fetes, dances, raffles and street stalls.



In 1958, staff quarters were enlarged and the hospital was extended to embrace a new operating theatre.

By 1962, it was evident that the hospital required further extension and upgrading and neither the existing building nor the site were capable of accommodating the required improvements.

At a public meeting on 24 July 1963, the community unanimously approved construction of a new hospital on its present site. At the same meeting, a fund-raising appeal was launched and \$77,700 was raised that day.

With the assistance of a grant from the Victorian Bush Nursing Association and a strenuous local appeal, it was now able to fund the construction of the new hospital at its current location.



The new building was officially opened by then Governor of Victoria Sir Rohan Delacombe on 15 April 1967.