

Ballan District Health & Care UPDATE

Ballan District Health & Care (BDHC) has been candid with the community in outlining the challenges it faces.

The way we operate has become unsustainable. We must change for the future.

At this critical time, it's important we come together with our dedicated and qualified staff to find new ways to deliver high quality, front-line health services that our community needs most.

Building on our successful partnerships with other health services, we have reviewed the ways we operate and have developed a comprehensive plan to become a sustainable health service into the future.

Our primary care – our GPs, Allied Health and Aged Care services, have always been central to our model of care and they will continue to be our focus.

By evolving to a sustainable services model, we can prioritise delivering contemporary, viable services where there is demand. Resources have been allocated to services that will deliver financially for the Ballan & District community and meet the health care needs of the community.

This update outlines plans for some of our services. We are providing further updates for other services in two weeks' time, to ensure the community can be kept informed through December and into 2020.

What are some of the **updates**?

GP and Allied Health services

Our GP Clinic and Allied Health services are central to health delivery in Ballan. It is our priority to ensure these services continue.

We have recently welcomed two new GPs to the Clinic, which is wonderful news for our community. More broadly, BDHC is looking at new business models and structures for the GP Clinic to ensure it can better service the community into the future.

Urgent Care

Currently, our Urgent Care Clinic is seeing an average of six people per week, or one per day, with types of presentations including a fall at home, abdominal pain, lacerations, gastro symptoms. This number is simply not sustainable.

Because of this, we will be diverting urgent care services out of the hospital by the end of 2019 and reallocating funds to provide the same standard of care in a new treatment room within the GP Clinic, which will cater for patients between 8:00am and 8:00pm on weekdays, and 9:00am to 1:00pm on Saturdays. This will provide the same standard of treatment for more than 80 percent of patients the Urgent Care Clinic currently receives. The cost of this service will not change.

As is the case now, all emergency cases will continue to be taken to the closest and most clinically appropriate health service.

Training will continue to be provided for clinic staff and we are exploring other opportunities to support GPs and Practice Nurses via My Emergency Doctor options.

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Home Care Packages

Home Care Packages are a government-funded, coordinated package of services tailored to meet the care needs of older people who wish to remain living at home.

BDHC will invest in and offer all four levels of Home Care Packages, tailoring a care plan that enables people to live independently at home. These are a priority for BDHC and will be a core part of our future. We will have more to say on this in coming weeks.

Childcare Centre

Our childcare service is in the process of changing its ownership structure so it can continue to successfully serve the Ballan community.

We will continue to support clients, staff and the provider throughout the transition to ensure the community continues to receive quality childcare and support.

Radiology

As we communicated, radiology services have ceased due to the retirement of our radiographer. BDHC is now working with partners in our region to ensure the community can access appropriate radiology services. We will provide another update to clients and the local community in early 2020.

Dental Service

As we communicated, the BDHC Dental Service is currently closed until further notice. Our service provider recently retired and we are reviewing how best to provide quality dental services into the future.

BDHC understands the delivery of dental services in Ballan is an important component of care. We have recently interviewed two potential dentists and are exploring a number of options for the delivery of dental services in Ballan. We will provide another update to clients and the local community in early 2020.

Our GPs, Allied Health and Aged Care services have always been central to our model of care and they will continue to be our focus.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for your feedback so far on these important updates, the majority of which has been very positive. There have also been some good questions and we wanted to answer these.

Questions from the community	Board Commitments
Is the community at risk of losing all health services?	No, our GP, Allied Health and Aged Care services have always been central to our model of care and they will continue to be our focus. The actions we are taking will ensure BDHC is here for the future.
Will I still be able to see a GP?	Yes, we have recruited two new GPs and we are aiming to increase this number. These changes will assist in this endeavour.
What are the alternatives outside of the GP Clinic hours?	Urgent care stabilisation will be provided at BDHC through the GP Clinic from 8:00am to 8:00pm on weekdays, and 9:00am to 1:00pm on Saturdays. After this time, the community can utilise services provided at Hepburn Health Service, Djerriwarrh Health Services and Ballarat Health Services. All emergency cases will continue to be taken to the closest and most clinically appropriate health service.
How far will I have to travel for services?	This depends on the treatment you require. For many services, you will still be able to access the care you need at BDHC facilities, including GP services. The closest health service is Djerriwarrh Health Services in Bacchus Marsh, which is a 15-minute drive. Ballarat Health Services is a 35-minute drive.
I have no means of getting to Bacchus Marsh or Ballarat for health care. What is going to happen to me?	In the event of an emergency, dial 000. As it happens currently, all emergency cases will continue to be taken to the closest and most clinically appropriate health service.
How exactly are current clinical operations unsustainable? Is the community at risk because of this?	The community is not at risk, but we are operating beyond our means. The way we operate has become unsustainable. We must change for the future and deliver high quality, front-line health services that our community needs most.

Frequently Asked Questions continued

<p>What's happening with District Nursing?</p>	<p>Ballan District Nursing provides home based health care by assisting with hygiene, wound care, medication management, diabetes management, emotional support and monitoring of health status.</p> <p>This service will continue, delivered through a partnership with other local health services to ensure care by the closest health service. This will not only make the service more sustainable, but provide more options for the future.</p>
<p>What is happening with acute beds and Aged Care?</p>	<p>We are currently establishing a new comprehensive model for acute beds and Aged Care services with improved accommodation options, and will provide an update in due course.</p>
<p>What is happening with Independent Living Units?</p>	<p>We are currently developing a new business model for Independent Living Units and will provide an update in due course.</p>

The Board is committed to ensuring that any concerns or questions are addressed. Much assessment and consideration has gone into ensuring that these decisions set BDHC up in the best way for the future.

More information about these updates, including the Frequently Asked Questions, can be found on our website at www.ballanhealth.com.au/news/