



**About Eastern Health CYMHS**

**A Guide  
for  
Parents  
and  
Carers**

## **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to the many consumers, parents and workers who contributed to the development of the Eastern Health CYMHS booklets.

From the 2002 Adolescent Reference Group and Consumer Information Project Steering Committee and to current Family / Carer Representatives, for feedback on booklet updates over the years. And a special thank you to Marisa Anderson, Family Carer Advisor, for assistance with booklet updates, 2015.

Information in this booklet is true and correct at the time of printing; however, agency details are subject to change.

Material in this booklet can be photocopied for training and education purposes. Full acknowledgement must be given to the source.

Copies of the booklet are available from the community teams, which are listed towards the end of the booklet.

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This booklet has been written to help parents and caregivers better understand our service.

We've tried to provide the kind of information you might want and need when you first come to Eastern Health CYMHS. It includes:

- an explanation of who we are
- a list of the types of problems or issues we're commonly asked to help with
- a description of how most people move through our service
- some answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs)
- a list of your rights when you use our service
- Information about how to contact clinicians and clinics

Please feel free to ask us for more information if you have any other questions.

### **Definitions:**

Consumer: A person who uses a mental health service

Case Manager/Clinician: A worker who looks after you when you are within Eastern Health CYMHS

CYMHS: Child and Youth Mental Health Service

People can use our service if they live in the Central and Outer Eastern regions of Melbourne, including the Cities of Whitehorse and Maroondah and the Shire of Yarra Ranges, as well as parts of the cities of Manningham, Knox and Monash.

CYMHS is part of Eastern Health and offers mental health care to children and young people (up to the age of 25) together with their families or carers. CYMHS is funded by the State Government of Victoria and is a free service.

CYMHS is a service staffed by specialists in mental health.

The workers who see children and young people at our service are often called 'clinicians'. All of them specialise in infant, child, and youth mental health. They include psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists, psychiatric nurses, paediatricians, speech therapists and specialist teachers. You and your child may be involved with one or more of these specialists, during your time with us.

Clinicians will keep your information private and confidential.

We also have Family Carer Advisors and Peers who can provide a family carer perspective on CYMHS services and are involved in providing family carer peer support.

Here is what some parents have said about CYMHS:

*'I understand what they're saying... they guide me through the issues and problems I have with the children... they don't use jargon. I get support and help for me as well.'*

*'Very responsive service....looking after the whole family'*

People come to get help with the following sorts of problems when they are causing a lot of distress and are having a significant impact. Usually children and young people come to CYMHS with complex issues that have not been able to be assisted by local support services.

Most of the people coming to CYMHS will have a combination of these problems:

#### **Psychological signs of distress**

- feeling or acting suicidal
- Self –harming behaviour
- possible symptoms of psychosis
  - hearing voices or seeing things that no one else thinks are real
  - having ideas or beliefs that seem out of touch with reality
- having moods that swing from really high to really low
- thinking they have to do something over and over again to feel ok

#### **Emotional / behavioural signs where most of the time the young person is:**

- refusing to attend school
- trouble controlling emotions
- have difficulty paying attention and concentrating.
- sad or depressed
- really anxious, nervous or stressed out
- fidgety and restlessness that interferes with school or work.
- angry
- isolated or numb

### **Health and wellbeing problems**

- Eating difficulties
- Sleeping difficulties
- Drug and alcohol use

### **Relationship problems that is severe and persistent for example:**

- family fights or conflict with parents, brothers or sisters
- difficulty in making and keeping friends
- social and play difficulties

### **What to Expect.**

The people who come to CYMHS for help are called our 'consumers'. While the child or young person is the focus of our service, in many ways all family members are our consumers. And, no matter what the child's age, parents and other caregivers are always seen as important partners and are given any information they need in order to care for their child.

- When you first contact us, an Access worker will ask questions to find out what issues your child and family are facing. The Access worker needs this information to decide whether our service is appropriate for you or what part of our service can help you.
- The Access worker will send out a letter with the time and date of your Initial Consultation appointment as well as some forms, asking you questions about how your child is going. This information helps us to know how helpful our service is.
- Most people get referred for an Initial Consultation to one of our community outpatient teams.
- The first visit to the clinic will be for an Initial Consultation. This will usually involve two clinicians talking with you and your child. This helps us decide and agree on where to from here. You and your family can expect some feedback after this meeting and an agreed plan which may include ongoing treatment with CYMHS or may be a referral to a more appropriate service that can meet your child's needs better.
- If you stay with the CYMHS Service an Individual Recovery Plan (IRP) will be developed to outline the agreed treatment plan for your child. This may include a comprehensive assessment which will assist the Clinical Case Manager in deciding, with you, the most appropriate treatment.
- Treatment usually involves regular appointments at the community clinic. Some appointments involve several family members (and may be called 'family therapy'). Sometimes the child or young person may be seen alone. Treatment may involve family members agreeing to do certain things between appointments. The worker may also ask permission to discuss your child's situation with other people who can help - like a school counselor or a G.P.
- There is a review of the IRP after about three months if your child, adolescent or young person is still in treatment.

**Other specialist teams in CYMHS that support the Community Teams include:**

- Early Psychosis Teams
- Neuro - Developmental Assessment Clinic
- The **Adolescent Day Program (Groupworx)** is a part-time group therapy program for young people. This runs once a term for 12 to 18 year olds.
- The **Adolescent Inpatient Unit** is a 12 bed hospital ward where young people aged 12 to 18 can stay if they need more intensive care.
- The **Adult Psychiatric Inpatient Units** where you can stay for more intensive treatment and care.
- The **Intensive Mobile Treatment Team** provides more intensive support in the community.

**To get the most out of your time at CYMHS, you can help by:**

- working together with the team
- sharing information
- let clinicians know beforehand if you cannot make an appointment. We are a very busy service so it would be great to have 24hour notice of cancellation.

**Frequently asked questions:**

**1. How can I prepare my child before coming to the service?**

Your child will get the most out of appointments if you discuss honestly why you are coming to the service. You could ask your child or young person if there are things they might like some help with. You can tell them that they'll be able to talk to someone about how they're feeling.

**2. What if my child refuses to come to the first appointment?**

We suggest you call and discuss the situation with your allocated clinician. You could also try suggesting to your child or young person that they come along 'just this once to see what it's like'.

**3. Who should come to the service with me?**

When any person in the family is upset, it affects other people, so everyone's view is very important. Sometimes issues affecting your child may also involve other family members.

We generally ask the whole family (everybody who usually lives in the household) to attend the Initial Consultation. Sometimes it may be helpful to have other services you are closely linked to attend the first appointment. Your allocated clinician will talk with you about who should attend any other appointments.

**4. What will happen at the first appointment?**

It's helpful to arrive 10 minutes early, as there may be registration forms to complete: ask the receptionist when you arrive.

In the Initial Consultation there are generally two clinicians who will meet with you and your child and family.

There will also be an opportunity for you as a parent/carer to meet one of the clinicians separately and likewise for your child and this will help us to get a better understanding of everyone's concerns which will then be discussed together.

You will then be involved in planning how the service can best help you and your family.

Feel free to let the clinician know if there are things that you wish to discuss without your child being present.

### **5. What will I need to bring with me?**

It's often helpful to have reports from school or any professionals you've previously seen. It may also be a good idea to bring snacks and drinks for your young children.

### **6. What will my role be in treatment?**

We believe parents can help their children more than anyone else, so your contribution is very important. Coming to appointments and family interviews will assist your child considerably. Answering questions about yourself and other family members also helps the treatment process.

If your child is seen individually, you may wonder what he or she is saying. All our clinicians are very aware of both your child's rights regarding privacy as well as your right to have the information you need in your role as parent or caregiver. Clinicians will work with each individual family to encourage the sharing of relevant information while respecting everyone's needs to feel comfortable about what is shared.

If you have concerns or questions about what's happening at any time, please feel free to ask your case manager to explain.

### **7. How often will I need to come?**

This can be decided with your clinician. We try as far as possible to make appointments that are convenient for you. Because the service operates from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm, it may be necessary to take time off work in order to attend. We can provide you with a certificate of attendance if this will help in taking time off work.

### **8. How long will I need to be with CYMHS?**

There's no fixed time period for working with you but when we regularly review your Individual child's Recovery Plan, we will discuss how treatment is progressing and the likely length of treatment required.

### **9. Can I have an interpreter?**

The service can provide an interpreter service for many languages. If you think it would be helpful to have an interpreter during your appointment; speak to your clinician before you come.

### **10. What happens to the information I give you?**

When you attend a Victorian public hospital or clinic such as Eastern Health CYMHS, workers need to collect information about your child, their condition and the outcomes of treatment.

You're not legally required to provide information to mental health workers, but it does help in the treatment of your child. Accurate information also helps the government develop better mental health services.

The clinicians keep an electronic record of your initial information and details of ongoing care in a hospital file known as the Clinical Patient File (CPF). Some information is also stored on a computerised database called Client Management Interface (CMI)

The information that's recorded includes details such as the age, condition and diagnosis of your child and some family details.

This information may be used by health professionals within Eastern Health CYMHS to treat your child. If your child goes to another mental health service, information about previous treatments can be obtained by the new workers from the CMI database.

You have the right to know what type of information is recorded about your child's treatment. If your child is of the age whereby they have the capacity to make a decision about who they share information with then you will need their consent.

Young people over the age of 18 are legally allowed to make decisions about their healthcare. If your daughter/son is under the age of 18 a decision about their level of maturity will be discussed and determined.

CYMHS highly values the involvement of parents/carers and significant others in the care of their young people so will encourage the young person to share information.

If the health professional considers your child mature enough to make certain decisions then information will not be shared (unless the young person is thought to be unsafe to themselves or others).

However, in order to actually see written records, you need to fill out forms required by the Freedom of Information (F.O.I.) legislation. You can do this at any stage, but it takes time to process your request, and you there is a fee.

Additional information on our privacy policy and practice is in Eastern Health's 'Protecting Your Privacy' pamphlet. If you have concerns about the privacy of your information, you should contact the Associate Program Director of Eastern Health CYMHS. Ask your clinical case manager for details.

#### **11. What should I do if I need help between appointments?**

If you need extra advice or help between appointments, ring the clinic and ask to speak to the clinician you normally see.

If you need to speak with someone, including after hours, call the Access / Mental Health Triage Service on **1300 721 927, option 2.**

#### **12. How can I provide feedback to the service?**

- You have a right to compliment or complain about your treatment or anything that you're happy/unhappy with
- You have a right to information about how to make a complaint (Start by talking with the clinician involved or their team leader (see team directory on pages 7, 8 & 9 of this booklet for contact numbers).
- An Eastern Health feedback booklet 'Your Feedback is Important to Us: We are Listening' lists other ways to provide us with feedback. This includes Experience of Care Survey's and Patient Opinion.  
Your feedback helps our service be more responsive to the needs of children, young people and their families.
- We sometimes have Youth Forums and Focus Groups where you can contribute your ideas. If you're interested in getting involved, please contact:

The Youth and Family Advisor Coordinator  
**Phone: 98954060**

***If you have any questions – ask your CYMHS worker.***

***We're keen to hear from you. Your ideas and feedback can help make CYMHS a better place for other young people.***

***"People who are using the service need to have a voice"***

***CYMHS Youth Peer Advisor***

### **13. What if I'm not happy about something regarding the service?**

We want to hear from you if you're unhappy with any aspect of our service. If you have a complaint, a good place to start is by talking directly with the worker involved or the team leader of the clinic you're attending. (Clinic contact numbers are listed on the back pages of this booklet.) If you are still unhappy please ask to speak to the manager at the service, your allocated clinician or the team leader will be able to give you the details.

Eastern Health also has a Complaints Pamphlet which lists other options for making a complaint.

### **14. What if I have other questions?**

Feel free to keep asking questions until you're satisfied that you understand what's happening.

Eastern Health CYMHS respect the following rights for you and your child in accordance with the "Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights in Victoria 2010":

- To have someone tell you about your rights
- A right to healthcare which is adequate and timely
- To have access to someone who speaks the same language
- A right to safe and high quality care.
- A right to be shown respect, dignity and consideration. You are entitled to receive care that is respectful to your culture, beliefs, values and characteristics like age and gender.
- A right to be informed about services, treatment options in a clear and open way.
- To ask questions and receive answers in a way that you and your son/daughter understands.
- To information that you need to support and care for your child or young person.
- To seek a second opinion
- To ask for another worker
- To get legal representation
- To complain if you or your child are not happy with the service



## **Child & Youth Mental Health Service**

### **Access Team**

A telephone service for referrals, general enquiries  
Phone: 1300 721 927, option 2

### **Associate Program Director**

Eastern Health CYMHS  
Upton House  
1/131 Thames Street  
Box Hill 3128  
Phone: 9895 4060

### **Clinical Director**

Eastern Health CYMHS  
Upton House  
1/131 Thames St,  
Box Hill 3128  
Phone: 9895 4060

### **Wundeela Team**

21 Ware Crescent,  
Ringwood East 3135  
Phone: 9870 9788

### **Chandler House Team**

16-18 Albert Street,  
Upper Ferntree Gully 3156  
Phone: 9839 6700

### **Box Hill Team**

3/43 Carrington Road,  
Box Hill 3128  
Phone: 9843 1200

### **Lilydale Team**

25 Market Street,  
Lilydale 3140  
Phone: 9091 8888

### **Intensive Mobile Treatment Team**

21 Ware Crescent,  
Ringwood East 3135  
Phone: 9870 9788

### **Groupworx**

21 Ware Crescent,  
Ringwood East 3135  
Phone: 9871 3845

### **Maroondah Early Psychosis Team**

Murnong Clinic,  
4 Bona St  
East Ringwood 3135  
Phone: 9871 3988

### **Box Hill Early Psychosis Team**

Koonung Clinic  
Level 1, 43 Carrington Road

Box Hill 3128  
Phone: 9843 5800

**Adolescent Inpatient Unit**

135 Thames Street,  
Box Hill 3128  
Phone: 9092 6740

**FaPMI& CHAMPS**

Easter Health Adult MHS  
Phone: 98713988  
Support families where a parent has a mental illness.

**CYMHS COPEs**

(carer peer support)  
Phone: 9843 5800

**After Hours Crisis Support**

Contact Psychiatric Triage Service on **1300 721 927**

## **Some Supports That May Be Helpful**

[www.tandemcarers.org.au](http://www.tandemcarers.org.au)

Peak body for carers of people living with mental health issues

[www.carersvictoria.org.au](http://www.carersvictoria.org.au)

The Carers Victoria site offers information, an advisory line, counseling, workshops and respite options to families and carers

[www.headspace.org.au](http://www.headspace.org.au)

The headspace site has information on mental health issues for young people

[www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth)

Victorian State Government Mental Health Services website

[www.mindaustralia.org.au](http://www.mindaustralia.org.au) Mind Australia offers a range of community and residential services in Victoria including family carer support and youth services.

[www.mifellowship.org.au](http://www.mifellowship.org.au) MI Fellowship offers a wide range of services and programs to people with mental illness, and the families, friends and carers of people with mental illness.



If you have any English language difficulties, please ask staff to book an interpreter. From home contact the Telephone Interpreter Service on 9605 3056. Services are provided free of charge. Ask staff if this information is available in your preferred language.

## Protecting Your Privacy

Eastern Health is committed to protecting your privacy.

We will keep your personal information secure and will disclose information about you only when required or permitted by law.

We comply with relevant information and privacy legislation.

If you would like more information, please ask a staff member or visit our Web site

[www.easternhealth.org.au](http://www.easternhealth.org.au)

Eastern Health is accredited by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards

If you have any English language difficulties, please ask staff to book an interpreter. From home, you can contact us directly by using the Telephone Interpreter Service 13 1450. Interpreter services are provided free of charge.

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