



At the  
**hospital**

A BOOK FOR FAMILIES

We hope this book helps children talk about where family members go for care and what it's like in the inpatient mental health unit. We want children to feel comfortable asking questions and be able to picture in their mind where their family member is staying for care.

# A note for parents and caregivers

This book explains the inpatient unit to children. If they can't visit the ward, it shows them what the hospital is like.

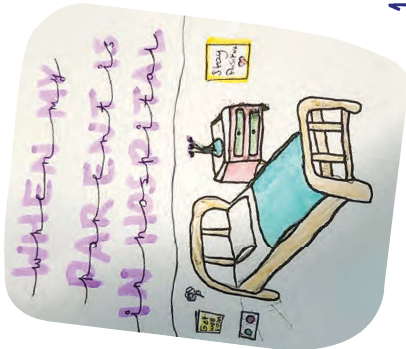
Children may be affected when a family member is unwell. The idea of someone special being sick or going to hospital can be unsettling. It's a time when children may need extra support at home and at school.

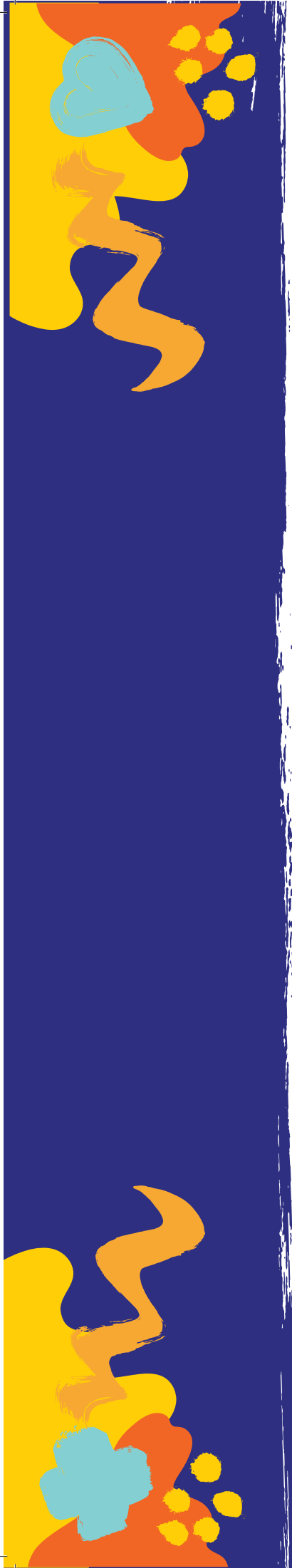
Sharing this book with children can help them talk about, ask questions and understand what is happening.

**Acknowledgement and thanks to:**  
 Ruan Bester (cover art), Lily Jobe (page 1 art), Ayla Myers (postcard art), Artist Amanda Wright, Alfred Health FaPMI, Peninsula Health FaPMI

**To get more copies of this book or for enquiries:**  
 Families where Parents have a Mental Illness (FaPMI) Program  
**Email** [fapmi@easternhealth.org.au](mailto:fapmi@easternhealth.org.au)  
**Phone** (03) 9871 3988 (business hours)  
**Find FaPMI online:** [www.easternhealth.org.au/fapmi.aspx](http://www.easternhealth.org.au/fapmi.aspx)

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#### Children generally cope better if:

- regular contact is maintained with their family member
- they have some understanding of what is happening
- they know they are not to blame
- their routines at school and social activities continue
- they have someone to talk to if they are worried or don't feel safe
- they have a familiar person looking after them who knows their routines
- they know what to expect when their family member comes home.

#### For more information:

- Speak to staff for advice on keeping in contact with people in hospital and how to talk about mental illness with children.
- The FaPMI (Families where a Parent has a Mental Illness) program has a range of resources and supports available for families.
- Find FaPMI online: [www.ea.ternhealth.org.au/fapmi.a&px](http://www.ea.ternhealth.org.au/fapmi.a&px)

This book can help you understand what happens if someone you know is going to hospital.

It can be helpful to see photos of where they spend their time while they are getting better.

Sometimes, just like people with a physical illness or injury, people with mental illness may have to go to hospital. They may have changes to their thoughts, feelings or behaviours and need help to get better.

It might make you feel sad, worried or scared if you don't know where they are going or what they are doing.



This is what the hospitals look like from the outside.

Inpatient Unit (IPU), MaroonDAH Hospital



The ward is called the **Mental Health Inpatient Unit.** It can be a **busy place.**

This is the **reception** where staff will **welcome you to the ward.**



Upton House, Box Hill Hospital





There are lots of things people can do in hospital.



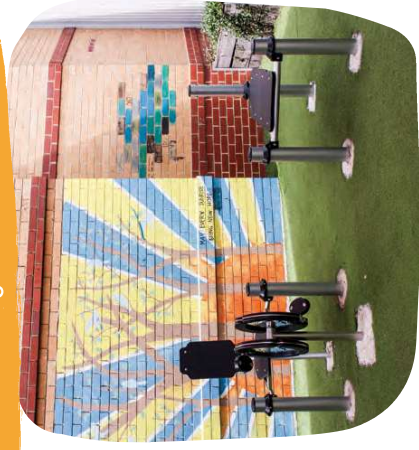
This is where your family member might read a book, watch TV or play pool.



This is where people have a drink and eat their meals.



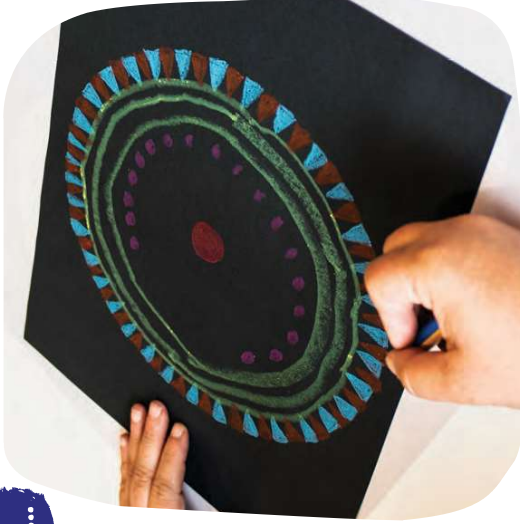
There is a big outdoor area where people can enjoy the sunshine and get fresh air, and places where they can exercise.





The activity room is a fun, creative space.

Lots of activities happen here each day such as art, craft, music, relaxation and tai chi.



Have a look at some of our art...





This is the **Sensory Room**.  
Here you can **relax** and **feel calm**.



Your **family member**  
will **sleep** in a room like this.

They can bring  
something  
**special** from **home**.

★ ★ ★

## Five Senses Exercise

★ ★ ★

There are different activities to engage your senses.

**Notice:**

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can feel
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste



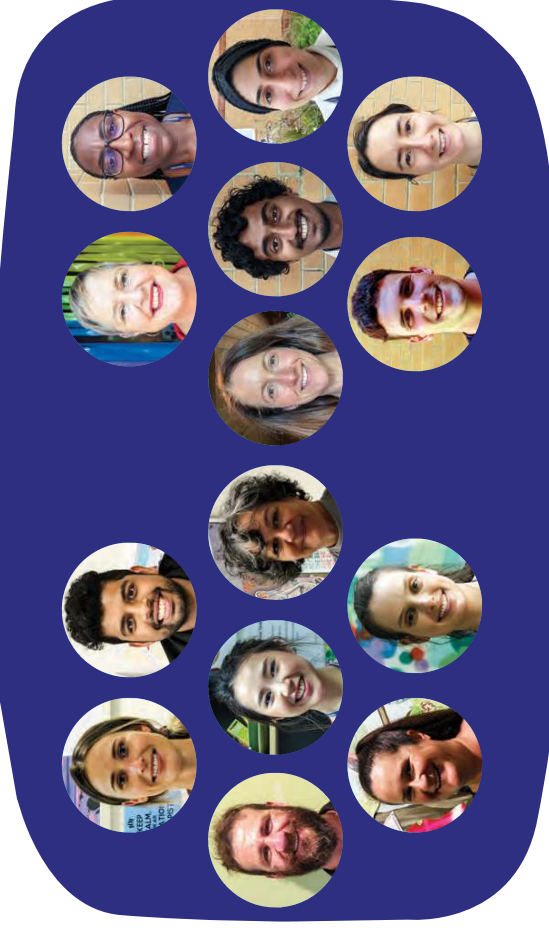
You might come to **visit** them. This is the **family room** where you can **meet** and **spend** time **together**.

This is a space  
where people can  
talk to staff about  
getting better.



There are many kinds of staff:  
occupational therapists, social workers,  
psychologists, peer workers, nurses  
and doctors.

Here are some of the friendly staff at the hospital.



If you ever have any questions, please ask a staff member.



You might like to stay in touch with your family member.

**You can call on the phone.**

IPU office phone 1:  
(03) 9955 1116 (9am-8pm)

IPU office phone 2:  
(03) 9955 1144 (9am-8pm)

Upton House phone:  
(03) 9895 4945 (10am-8pm)

**In an emergency, contact the Mental Health Access and Triage Service on 1300 721 927 or call 000.**

**If you need to talk to someone call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800.**

**You can send a postcard.**

Write a message, choose an address and tear out the postcard. Put a stamp on it and post it.

**Where is your family member staying?**

Find out and choose the right address.

**Upton House**  
Box Hill Hospital  
131 Thames Street, Box Hill  
Victoria 3128

**IPU 1 and IPU 2**  
Maroondah Hospital  
Grey Street, Ringwood East  
Victoria 3135

# Tear-Out Postcard

▶ TEAR HERE

**STAMP**

**To:**

**Address:**

**Message:**



Artist: Ajla Myers, age 12