

Newsletter | April 2026

Seniors HQ



Health & Wellbeing

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5338 4500 | bchc.org.au

Seniors HQ



Welcome to the Ballarat Community Health Seniors HQ Newsletter

We aim to provide you with information to help you stay connected to our services and maintain a healthy lifestyle with positive well-being and independence.

What to expect

In each edition:

- 'BCH in Focus' for the latest news on BCH services, sites and people.
- Events happening soon that you may wish to attend.
- Articles on health and wellbeing topics.

Feedback

Your feedback matters. It helps us shape the way we support the community.

We welcome feedback at any time. Speak to our team or visit our website (bchc.org.au) for more information.

We encourage you to participate in our client surveys and we may invite you to join.

Feel free to tell us what you think about this newsletter at any time. We are looking at other ways we can seek your feedback on this newsletter. Please look out for further information in future editions.

Thank you

For sharing your experiences in our 2025 Annual Client Feedback Survey.

Learn more bchc.org.au/news/client_feedback_2025/

We're proud to support you, and grateful you've trusted BCH with your care. Your feedback tells us you feel more heard, more involved, and more confident managing your health and wellbeing with BCH by your side.

BCH in Focus

Exercise Programs at BCH

Staying active is essential for good health, especially as we age

Regular exercise helps maintain strength, balance, and mobility, which are key factors that support older adults to live safely and independently at home for longer.

At Ballarat Community Health, our Accredited Exercise Physiologists deliver safe, tailored programs to help you move better, feel stronger, and stay independent. Exercise can improve everyday function like walking, climbing stairs, and getting in and out of chairs, while reducing the risk of falls.

Lifestyle Support

Our team specialises in preventing and managing chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, arthritis, cancer, respiratory conditions, and depression. Through targeted exercise and lifestyle support, we help improve function, manage symptoms, and enhance overall wellbeing.

The team works with you to create a personalised plan aligned with your goals, helping you maintain confidence, independence, and quality of life, with a strong focus on healthy, independent ageing.

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Lucas Seniors Exercise Park

The Lucas Seniors Exercise Park offers a safe, accessible space supporting older adults to stay active, connected and independent. Delivered through the City of Ballarat Ageing Well Strategy, it features low-impact equipment, walking circuits and social spaces, encouraging physical activity, wellbeing and community connection in a growing local area, with free sessions to further activate the space.

Learn more <https://lucasballarat.com.au/seniors-exercise-park-come-and-try-days/>

Health Spotlight: Influenza

Most of us can remember at least once in our lives when we or a loved one has experienced the flu, motivating us to try to protect ourselves from going through it again. For older people the flu can cause more serious illness, and early protection helps keep you well, active and out of hospital.

Despite knowing the risks, the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners has reported a steady decline in the number of people aged over 65 getting the flu vaccination each year, leading to an increase in presentations to doctors and hospitals for older people with flu-like symptoms. They reported that 2025 had the highest number of flu cases on record.

The flu is highly contagious and spreads through droplets from your nose and throat, especially by coughing or sneezing. Symptoms may include fever and chills, cough, sore throat, sneezing and stuffy or runny nose, tiredness, headache, muscle aches and joint pains.

Most people will get better without medical treatment and by getting plenty of rest, staying well hydrated and keeping warm. However older people living with heart disease, kidney disease, diabetes, or a chronic lung condition such as asthma, are at higher risk of complications associated with the flu.

As per the Australian Government's Health Direct website, the most effective way to prevent influenza is to receive a flu vaccination annually, and it is available for free for people aged over 65.

Having your flu vaccine early in the season gives your body time to build protection before the flu starts spreading. It takes about two weeks for the vaccine to work.

You can also find your nearest flu vaccine provider via the link below:

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services/all-services/influenza-flu-vaccine/>



Our goal at BCH is to provide you with trusted, unbiased, clear and evidence-based information. When presenting externally sourced information we will always identify this. BCH has not been paid, given gifts, or offered any other incentives to promote this content. We have not verified the content and make no representations as to its accuracy or completeness. We encourage you to do your own research before acting on any of the information provided.

We welcome feedback and complaints anytime. Speak to our team or visit our website (bchc.org.au) for more information.

The importance of oral health

Maintaining good oral and dental health is essential for our overall quality of life, but many older people face challenges sustaining this without some assistance. Our Oral health is tightly connected to overall health in both directions. Medications we take can lead to a dry mouth which impacts oral health and many general health conditions can also worsen oral problems.

Here are some things to watch out for that might indicate you need to access dental care or treatments:

- Chronic toothaches
- Swollen, tender or bleeding gums
- Problems with chewing
- Missing or loose teeth that negatively impact your eating
- Struggling to eat certain foods – pain or discomfort whilst eating
- Avoiding social situations because of worries about your teeth



The Australian Dental Association suggest a range of things everyone can do to keep their teeth and mouths in the best possible condition:

- Preventive measures, such as visiting a dentist for a check-up at least every year or two
- Daily brushing of teeth and dentures
- Having a healthy and balanced diet
- Drinking enough water to prevent a dry mouth

Aged pensioners in Australia who hold a Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card or a DVA Gold Card can also access significantly subsidised public dental care through State and Territory health services. While long waiting lists are common, emergency care is given priority.

The services offered include examinations, fillings, dentures, and emergency care, typically requiring a small co-payment of \$32 in Victoria.

In Ballarat, public dental services are delivered by Grampians Health Services clinic, located on the Cnr Hertford Street and Tuppen Drive Sebastopol.

Phone: 5320 4225

Further information about public dental services in our region is available by visiting this link: <https://www.ohv.org.au/our-services/find-dental-clinics>

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Free online events for carers

April 30th

Navigating caring for someone with a life-limiting illness

The aim of this session is to provide a compassionate overview of palliative care and the end-of-life journey. It includes practical guidance that many carers wish they'd known earlier, and the opportunity to ask questions.

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/caring-at-end-of-life-what-carers-often-wish-they-had-known-earlier-tickets-1981635016679>

May 5th

Evening guided meditations for busy carers

Throughout this nurturing series, carers will be guided through a restorative meditation designed to quieten the mind and create deep stillness.

<https://carergateway.benevolent.org.au/event/the-art-of-letting-go--meditation-series>

May 8th

Understanding the different types of dementia

This session provides an introduction to dementia including an overview of different types of dementia, diagnosis, planning ahead and how to support someone living with dementia.

<https://www.dementia.org.au/events/understanding-dementia-137>

Ballarat Ageing Well Expo 2026

May 26th - Hold the date

City of Ballarat Ageing Well Expo 2026

This expo is designed to provide valuable information and resources to people 55 years and over, carers, family members and friends.

Attendees are provided with the opportunity to learn about the changes to aged care and explore options, services and supports that are available locally to help people age well.

When: Tuesday 26 May 2026, 10am-2pm

Where: [Mecure Ballarat Hotel and Convention Centre](#)
613 Main Road, Golden Point

<https://www.ballarat.vic.gov.au/community/ageing-well-ballarat/ballarat-ageing-well-expo>



Online resources

Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy Community Survey

City of Ballarat | My Say Ballarat

<https://mysay.ballarat.vic.gov.au/ageing-well-ballarat-strategy/ageing-well-ballarat-strategy-community-survey>

Need help getting online?

Several organizations in Ballarat provide free or low-cost digital skills training, internet access, and support for seniors to get online. Options include:

Ballarat Libraries

Offer "Tech Café" sessions and workshops. They also offer 45-minute sessions for help with MyGov, Services Vic, and Seniors Cards. Visit their website for further information.

<https://libraries.ballarat.vic.gov.au/learn/tech-hub>

Neighbourhood Houses

Offer support as network partners in the "Be Connected, Building Digital Skills" program <https://beconnected.esafety.gov.au/>. Services may include 1:1 digital skills support with mentors and help with tablets, phones, and computers. Please check with your local neighbourhood house for service offerings and times.

<https://beconnected.esafety.gov.au/computer-classes-near-you>

