

Newsletter | May 2026

Seniors HQ



Health & Wellbeing

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5338 4500 | bchc.org.au



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

We're now accepting referrals for our Seniors Lifestyle Victoria Program

Ballarat Community Health is proud to introduce the Seniors Lifestyle Victoria program, designed to support older adults in our community to stay active, connected, and engaged.

Recognising the importance of healthy ageing, the program offers a welcoming space where seniors can access a range of activities, resources, and support tailored to their interests and needs.

Seniors Lifestyle Victoria is all about helping people maintain independence while enjoying a fulfilling and balanced lifestyle.

Delivered by our experienced team, Seniors Lifestyle Victoria Program reflects Ballarat Community Health's commitment to promoting holistic wellbeing for people at every stage of life.

We warmly invite community members to get involved and discover how small, positive lifestyle changes can make a big difference in staying healthy, happy, and connected.

For more information or to submit a self referral visit

<https://bchc.org.au/service/seniors-lifestyle-victoria-program/>

Meet Dr Richa

Dr Richa Sabharwal MBBS, FRACGP, is a General Practitioner based at BCH Howitt Street Clinic, welcoming new patients. Dr Richa consults on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Dr Richa believes in providing compassionate, whole-person care — taking the time to listen and support each patient as an individual.

Dr Richa completed her General Practice training and was awarded Fellowship from the Royal Australasian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) in 2022. She brings a wealth of experience gained across general practice, Aboriginal health clinics, and major hospitals throughout Victoria — including Ballarat Base Hospital, Austin Hospital, the Northern Hospital, Werribee Mercy, and University Hospital Geelong.

Dr Richa has worked across a broad range of specialties, including general medicine, emergency medicine, aged care, rehabilitation, and obstetrics and gynaecology.

Book an appointment with Dr Richa at our Howitt Street GP Clinic located at 1042 Howitt Street, Wendouree. Phone 03-5338 4500 or book online via hotdoc.

<https://www.hotdoc.com.au/medical-centres/wendouree-VIC-3355/ballarat-community-health-wendouree/doctors/dr-richa-sabharwal-1>



Health Spotlight on Diabetes

According to Diabetes Australia, approximately 1.5 million people are living with diabetes in Australia today, with an additional 120,000 people being diagnosed every year.

A healthy, balanced diet, moderate exercise and early intervention measures are of great benefit to any individual's health.

Those who have diabetes, know that modifying their diet and lifestyle to control blood glucose levels is important. Management of diabetes requires knowledge and regular review.

Diabetes educators are health professionals who have completed further study in diabetes care and are specialized in supporting a person to manage their condition.

Diabetes educators are facilitators of knowledge which empowers a person with diabetes to make informed, educated decisions daily. This inevitably leads to improved quality of life and better health outcomes.

Clients can be referred by another health professional or by self-referral.

Some of the many areas Diabetes Educators address are;

- Understanding recently diagnosed diabetes or pre-diabetes
- Commencing insulin and adjusting insulin doses
- Commencing other injectable diabetes medications or diabetes tablets
- Managing blood glucose levels, highs and lows
- Technology support through use of Continuous Glucose Monitors
- Ongoing support for clients and their support persons
- Referral to other health professionals as appropriate
- Liaison with GPs, specialists and other health professionals.

At Ballarat Community Health there are many health care providers that work collaboratively and can be accessed to assist you with the management of your diabetes.

These include, Dietitians, Exercise Physiologist programs, Podiatrists, GPs, Counsellors and practice nurses or a Support at Home Clinical Care Partner.

GP Care Plans can provide access to subsidised allied health visits and additional government-funded support programs. Once referred to a service, you will receive an individual assessment to identify your specific needs and connect you with the most appropriate supports.

Speak with your GP, your Care Partner, or a member of our team at BCH to discuss whether an assessment and additional support services may benefit you.

For further information and support, Diabetes Australia is a valuable resource. You can also contact My Aged Care on **1800 200 422** to discuss whether clinically based services and supports may be suitable for your needs.

Diabetes Australia

Phone: **1800 177 055**

Website: <https://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/>



Aged Care Code of Conduct

As part of their commitment to continuously improving the experience and outcomes for older people receiving subsidised aged care services, the Commonwealth Government has developed a special Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct applies to all of our staff, volunteers and external contractors who are involved in your care.

You can read more about the Code of Conduct by asking us for a copy of the Consumer Guidance booklet, or by visiting

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/resources/code-conduct-aged-care-consumer-quick-reference-guide>



What does the Aged Care Code of Conduct mean for you?

We strive to ensure that our staff already conduct themselves in the most professional and exemplary way, however, we embrace the Code of Conduct as a way of reminding all of us about our responsibilities, and your rights. This means, in practice, that you should be treated well and feel safe, always.

Our staff receive ongoing training related to their responsibilities and obligations to conform to the requirements of the Aged Care Code of Conduct.

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.

City of Ballarat Ageing Well Expo

Connecting residents aged 55 and over with information, services and support.

The City of Ballarat looks forward to welcoming community members to the Ballarat Ageing Well Expo will be held on Tuesday 26 May, from 10am to 2pm at the Mercure Ballarat Hotel and Convention Centre. Entry is free, and attendees are welcome to drop in at any time throughout the day.

This year's event will feature informative talks and more than 60 stalls, including health and aged care providers, advocacy and support groups, wellbeing initiatives, aids and equipment, and practical ways to remain independent at home.

City of Ballarat Mayor, Cr Tracey Hargreaves said "We received overwhelmingly positive feedback from last year's Ballarat Ageing Well Expo, which has motivated us to deliver an even bigger and better event this year. We also encourage partners, carers, friends and family members to attend, as the information is useful for anyone supporting their loved ones."

The Ageing Well Expo serves as a one-stop-shop for community members seeking local support, guidance and resources. Ballarat Age Friendly Ambassador Pam Hegarty said these events play a vital role in helping the community make informed decisions. "This is the best expo I've attended in years. It gives local info to help people make informed choices," she said.

The Healthy Ageing team from Ballarat Community Health will also attend the Expo.

"After the success of last year's event, Ballarat Community Health is excited to again be part of the Ageing Well Expo," Claire Shaw, Executive Manager, Aged Care at Ballarat Community Health said.

"We have a range of services and programs helping older Australians remain independent, healthy and connected through our healthy ageing programs. We encourage community to get down to the expo."

As outlined in the City of Ballarat's Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026, more than 30 per cent of residents are aged 55 years and over and this number continues to grow.

One of the strategy's key focus areas is ensuring residents have access to the information and services they need. The City of Ballarat provides a year-round program of social activities, events and initiatives for residents aged 55 and over.

For more information visit

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



*Featured above City of Ballarat Mayor Cr Tracey Hargreaves at Mecure Ballarat.
Below, Abi Dewan, Manager, Support at Home Services, Ballarat Community Health, Pam Hegarty, Ballarat Age Friendly Ambassador and Claire Shaw, Executive Manager, Ballarat Community Health.*

Free Events

City of Ballarat Ageing Well Expo

When Tuesday May 26th, 10am-2pm

Where Mecure Ballarat Hotel and Convention Centre,
613 Main Road Golden Point

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.

For more information visit

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



Understanding Aged Care Complaints

When Tuesday May 26th, 1pm-2pm

Where Online Webinar - Registration required

Join OPAN's panel of experts as they discuss the aged care complaints process. Topics include what's changed under the new Act, the role of mediation, and the expanded powers of the new Complaints Commissioner and what they mean for older people and their families.

For more information visit

<https://opan.org.au/event/navigating-aged-care-complaints/>

Living Well with Parkinson's Disease

When Wednesday May 27th, 1.30pm-2.30pm

Where Online Webinar - Registration required

This event provides an overview of Parkinson's disease, including how symptoms may develop over time and affect daily life. It also highlights services and support networks available to assist you in your caring role.

For more information visit

<https://carergateway.benevolent.org.au/event/living-well-with-parkinsons-disease--online/>

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council (BRMC)

Welcome Morning Tea

When Wednesday May 27th, 11.30am-1pm

Where BRMC Welcome Centre,
25-39 Barkly Street, Ballarat

Are you new to the area, or simply looking to expand your circle? We invite you to the next Welcome Morning Tea at Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council.

It's the perfect, relaxed space to:

Connect Meet friendly locals, fellow newcomers, and the BRMC team.

Network Share your story, exchange ideas, and discover exciting local opportunities.

Belong Learn more about how we support our vibrant, multicultural community and how you can get involved.

Whether you're here to make new friends, find local connections, or just enjoy a warm cuppa and a chat, there's a seat at the table for you.

For more information phone 0491 066 246 or visit

<https://www.brmc.org.au/>

Introduction to Services and Support for Carers

When Thursday June 11th, 10am-12pm

Where Vickers Street Community Hub,
254 Vickers Street Sebastopol

This event will provide you with information to empower you in navigating the carer support benefit system. You will also connect with other local carers in a relaxed social environment. This session is FREE with morning tea provided. Registration required.

For more information visit

<https://events.humanitix.com/introduction-to-services-and-supports-for-carers>

Mind Matters: Supporting Your Mental Wellbeing

When Monday June 22nd, 10.30am-12pm

Where Ballarat Community Health Cooina Multipurpose Room,
10 Learmonth Road, Wendouree

An education session to build confidence and learn practical strategies to support your mind, mood and life changes. This session is FREE and registrations are essential.

For more information visit

<https://events.humanitix.com/healthy-ageing-series-3-mind-matters-supporting-your-mental-wellbeing>