

After-hours* toolkit guide for residential aged care homes

An instructional guide to help residential aged care homes understand the importance of after hours action-planning, where to find afterhours resources, and how to use and keep them up-to-date.



* After-hours refers to outside regular hours (ie the night time period and weekends).

Background

Primary Health Networks received funding to support the Australian Government's response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

A key objective is for primary health networks to bring greater awareness to residential aged care homes (RACHs) about the after-hours services provided by general practitioners and other health professionals.

These services can reduce hospital presentations for RACH residents, through providing appropriate care in the facility.

Central and Eastern Sydney PHN has adapted an after-hours toolkit using content developed by North Western Melbourne and South Eastern Melbourne PHN.

How to use the after-hours toolkit

The after-hours toolkit has been developed following consultations with local RACHs, GPs and LHD aged care teams.

The toolkit:

- provides guidance on creating appropriate after-hours plans for residents
- educates staff on after-hours health care options and processes
- encourages procedures for keeping residents' digital medical records up to date, particularly following an episode where after-hours care was required
- supports engagement between RACHs and their residents GPs' and other relevant health professionals as part of after-hours action plans.

The resources and templates are designed to be dynamic documents, meaning plans should be revised and updated regularly to reflect policies and procedures, available services, and changes in care.

This guide explains how to implement, use and update the toolkit components.



Tools included in after-hours toolkit

After-hours toolkit items	Purpose of tool, how to use and keep up-to-date	Where to access
After-hours action planning audit tool 	<p>This enables RACHs to self-assess their current after-hours preparedness, identify gaps in afterhours capabilities, and identify which resources, processes and procedures could be adopted to improve access to appropriate medical care for residents.</p> <p>Use this to assess the status of your RACH's after-hours preparedness. It contains links to other helpful after-hours resources.</p>	
Medical support checklist 	<p>This tool is a checklist, based on the ISBAR communication tool, to aid staff when a resident is unwell and support is required. To use it, complete the form and contact any service where you need to provide information on a patient's condition, such as a GP, locum service. For more information on examples of types of low to medium acuity conditions referred to in this resource, please visit Medical referral options for residents in aged care homes.</p> <p>It can be printed as an A4 notepad or used digitally and distributed to all nursing stations. If there is a clinical symptom a resident presents and you do not know which service to contact, call your Registered Nurse to confirm.</p>	
Family fact sheet 	<p>This is a fact sheet that informs family members and carers of RACH residents about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens if someone falls ill at night, or on the weekend. • What families can do to help. 	
Service directory 	<p>This assists staff to identify services available in your region in the after-hours period. It has two components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A locum or deputising and pharmacy service directory in which to list relevant services and contact details. 2. Service Directory - A standardised after-hours service directory detailing Geriatric Outreach Service Team details and broader services. <p>Keeping these updated and available to all staff is essential.</p>	
Person-centered after-hours action plan 	<p>This enables staff to summarise key information explaining a resident's after-hours care plans, for quick and simple reference during an emergency</p> <p>The plan should be placed where staff can easily access it at all times, while also respecting the resident's right to privacy. It should be regularly reviewed and updated.</p>	