

Using healthcare services in the community

He mahi tikanga oranga mo te kātoa

Home and community support and mental health and addiction services

Knowing what is available and what to expect may help you to get the best from your care.

There may be differences in processes from one community healthcare service to the next, as each service does things in its own way to support its community.

The range and nature of services may also differ depending on where you live.

If you have specific questions, we suggest you contact the community healthcare service directly.

Other services in the community

A number of community healthcare services can be provided to you outside a hospital, general practice, or pharmacy.

These include:

- home and community support services
- test collection centres (e.g., for blood and urine tests)
- community mental health and addiction services
- dentists
- physiotherapists and occupational therapists
- counsellors and psychologists
- social workers
- dietitians and nutritionists.

You can access many of these services through a referral from your doctor or hospital. However, there may be a cost to you to use these services.

Support needs

If you need support when you are using a community healthcare service, you are entitled to have your support needs met.

For example:

- access to a New Zealand Sign Language interpreter
- having information written down to help you understand it better
- support to access services and make decisions.

You can also ask for healthcare professionals who are the same gender as you, or to have a chaperone present for consultations and tests.

You may find it useful to have a My Health Passport booklet on hand to help with communication and to hold information about your support needs.

Home and community support services

These services are there to help you to live independently in your home and to access your community. You may have a disability, or you may have had a change in circumstances that means you need more support to live at home.

The first step is to have your support needs assessed by your local Needs Assessment Service Coordination (NASC) team. You can contact them directly, or you can be referred by your doctor or the hospital.

Once you have been assessed as needing support, a service provider will talk with you about the services you need and create a support plan for you. This may take some time.

Support can include help with:

- preparing meals
- washing and drying clothes
- house cleaning
- help with eating and drinking
- getting dressed and undressed, and showering and toileting.

Nurses can also help with things such as:

- continence management
- catheter care and stoma care
- wound care
- medication oversight and management.

District nurses and palliative care nurses

District nurses can provide specialist nursing care so that you don't need to be hospitalised.

Palliative care nurses also specialise in providing care for people who have an illness that cannot be cured and may at some time result in the person dying.

They are trained in the following areas:

- wound care and postoperative care
- medication administration

- management of illnesses and diseases
- pain management.

Mental health and addiction services

Mental health and addiction services are there to help you. There are different services depending on where you live and your age.

A number of community organisations provide services, including services for youth, alcohol and other drug programmes, and counselling.

Most people can be referred to services through their doctor or hospital. There may be a long wait time to access these services.

If it is an emergency, contact your local DHB's psychiatric emergency service or mental health crisis assessment team for help.

Or you can talk to someone about your concerns on the following contact numbers:

- Need to talk? (1737 — free call or text)
- The Depression Helpline (0800 111 757)
- Healthline (0800 611 116)
- Lifeline (0800 543 354)
- Samaritans (0800 726 666)
- Youthline (0800 376 633)
- Alcohol Drug Helpline (0800 787 797)
- What's Up? — Helpline for children and young people (0800 942 8787)

For further information about your rights when accessing health or disability services, or to raise your concerns about the service you received, please contact:

The Nationwide Health & Disability Advocacy Service

- Free phone: 0800 555 050
- Email: advocacy@advocacy.org.nz
- Website: www.advocacy.org.nz

The Health and Disability Commissioner

- Postal address: PO BOX 1791, Auckland, 1140
- Auckland: (09) 373 1060; Wellington: (04) 494 7900
- National freephone: 0800 11 22 33
- Email: hdc@hdc.org.nz
- Website: www.hdc.org.nz