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28 April 2023

I don't think I can recall a more beautiful autumn than that we are currently experiencing. Feeling very confident about the weather, 25 of us looked forward to enjoying a warm sunny day at Melbourne's Botanic Gardens yesterday. And so it was when we set out to meet at 11 am... until about 10.50 when the heavens opened up at full strength.

Just like our trip to Peninsula Hot Springs in March, which began with heavy rain...ISFAF won the day, as the picture shows.



If you are on a good thing - never give up. As the picture shows, the sun returned quickly on both days. We followed our lovely time in the fresh air with excellent lunches and refreshments.

I am proud to say that no-one was even slightly deterred by the heavy rain on either day, each of which was soon enjoyed in full sunshine. But as my wise father used to say when I complained of some triviality – 'Worse things have happened to us'....and don't carers know the truth of that!

Hopefully our social programme will continue to be as enjoyable as it has been, but just to be safe, our winter event is to be indoors. 'Beautiful Highness' a black comedy based on a family's experience of mental health challenges promises to be well written, heart-warming play presented by a top level team.

If you wish to attend, please follow the instructions on the attached flier. A description of the play and cast is on page 4. Ticket numbers are limited and cannot be extended.

I look forward to catching up at our coming Housing Forum at our monthly meeting on Tuesday 9 May,

Warm Regards,  
Judi  
M: 0425 723 746

### **ISFAF CARER SUPPORT GROUP** **MONTHLY MEETINGS**

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month  
Level 4, 549 St Kilda Road, Melbourne

From 7.05pm, committee members provide a light supper which we look forward to sharing with you.

**TUESDAY 9 MAY 2023 AT 7.30PM**

#### **FORUM ON HOUSING**

##### **SPEAKERS:**

- **KATE INCERTI, Team Leader Housing, Homelessness', Community Building, Inclusion**
- **PIERRE LEACH, Occupancy Management Lead, Housing Strategy, Mind Aust**

There is no charge for meetings, but a small donation is greatly appreciated.

Booking is not needed. We look forward to seeing you. For questions /help with transport,  
Ph: Judi: 0425 723 746 or Eleni 0412 018 722

### **ENJOY A NEW AUSTRALIAN BLACK COMEDY** **BY CHELSEA PLUMLEY**

IN THE COMPANY OF ISFAF FRIENDS, WITH A POST SHOW Q&A AND A REFRESHMENT INCLUDED FOR DONATION OF

\$10 pensioners, \$20 non-pensioners  
Information about the play is on the back page.



**SUNDAY MAY 21 AT 4PM,**  
**CHAPEL OFF CHAPEL**  
**12 LITTLE CHAPEL ST,**  
**PRAHRAN**

**Seats are limited.**  
**Bookings are essential.**

#### **To Book:**

1. deposit your donation to:  
Westpac ISFAF Community One Account  
BSB 033-169 A/c No: 258307,
2. make sure your deposit shows your name
3. email [isfaf@alfred.org.au](mailto:isfaf@alfred.org.au) with proof of booking
4. your ticket will be emailed to you. If you don't receive your ticket by Wednesday May 17 please email [elenikontos@icloud.com](mailto:elenikontos@icloud.com)

## **EARLY PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORTS PROGRAM EXTENDED**

<https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/site-4/early-psychosocial-supports-program-extended>

The Victorian State Government has extended the Early Intervention Psychological Support Response (EIPSR) by two years. Designed for individuals who can't yet access or aren't eligible for the NDIS, the EIPSR program provides short to medium term one-to-one and group psychosocial support for Victorians aged 16-64 years.

In our area, referrals can be made through AMAH Case Managers / St Kilda Rd Clinic Ph: 9076 8888

In other locations, contact your area mental health unit or one of the ten NGOs delivering the EIPSR program across Vic: Mind Australia, Wellways Australia, EACH, Cohealth, Mallee Family Care, ERMHA, Star Health, Sacred Heart Mission, Mentis Assist, Uniting Vic Tas.

## **BETTER HEALTH CHANNEL**

Is a Victorian initiative providing health alerts, current information on health services and supports available across Victoria and information on conditions and treatments. It is written by experts in their field and is available at:

[Better Health Channel - Better Health Channel](#)

## **FREE MH SUPPORT**



**MENTAL HEALTH AND  
WELLBEING HUBS  
(MHWBHs)**

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/node/2852#find-your-nearest-hub>

### **GP REFERRAL NOT REQUIRED**

As discussed in our Summer Newsletter, six MHWBLs are in operation – ie Benalla-Wangaratta-Mansfield, Brimbank, Frankston, Greater Geelong-Queenscliff, Latrobe and Whittlesea. It is planned that by the end of 2026, a further 54 will be operating across Victoria, providing free MH services to individuals aged over 25 years. Currently, free mental health self-referred support can be obtained from:

- Partners in Wellbeing (PiW) Ph: 1300 375 330  
[https://www.partnersinwellbeing.org.au/?qclid=EAlaIqobChMl2\\_Kz\\_v4nP\\_glVxZlmAh1v9wLgEAAYASAAEglQEfD\\_BwE](https://www.partnersinwellbeing.org.au/?qclid=EAlaIqobChMl2_Kz_v4nP_glVxZlmAh1v9wLgEAAYASAAEglQEfD_BwE)

Mon – Fri: 9 am - 10 pm

Weekends: 9 am - 5 pm

In addition to offering a range of services, PiW can refer you to the one of the many MHWBHs operating across Victoria.

For a full list see: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/mental-health-and-wellbeing-hubs#find-your-nearest-hub>

Examples in the Melbourne metropolitan area are:

- Abbotsford
- Box Hill
- Cheltenham
- Coburg
- Frankston
- Footscray

- Melbourne
- St Kilda

Professional support is provided for a range of issues including homelessness, drug, alcohol, anxiety and any stressor or mental health concern of your own or those around you.

Face to face, telehealth and on-line access, including assistance to anonymous callers is provided according to the service available and your need. Some hubs can be accessed via 'walk-ins'.

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING ACT 2022**

Victoria's new MHWB Act comes into operation on 1 September 2023 and repeals the Mental Health Act 2014. The full Act is well worth reading. It available at:

[Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022 \(legislation.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Mental-Health-and-Wellbeing-Act-2022)

It is heartening to read in the Act the following: (par 20, p.41):

*'Family and carers principle Families, carers and supporters (including children) of a person receiving mental health and wellbeing services are to be supported in their role in decisions about the person's assessment, treatment and recovery.'*

We plan to devote a monthly meeting to learning about the Act, with a speaker to guide us to learning about the changes from the MH Act 2014 which applies currently.

## **PATHWAYS FOR CARERS**

<https://pathwaysforcarers.com.au/contact-us/>

Pathway for Carers is an initiative supported by the Victorian Government to offer carers group walks to carers and to provide an opportunity for carers to chat over a refreshment afterwards. The walks are open to carers of individuals across the range of disabilities and are not restricted to mental health issues. A wide range of urban and rural locations are available, enabling you to participate near your usual locale, and/or, if away from home needing likeminded company, you can look for a walk near where you are staying. Many of our local councils participate in the programme. The walks are generally short – 45 minutes - with a complimentary refreshment to follow.

### **Brokerage – Financial help**

- Tandem – Carer Support Fund (CSF)  
<https://tandemcarers.org.au/>

Financial assistance is available to carers via the CSF which is administered by Tandem. The CSF is available only to carers whose loved one is being managed by an Area Mental Health Service – eg Alfred, Melbourne, Monash, St. Vincents. Application needs to be via the area mental health service. Talk to Case Manager / Carer Peer Worker / Social Worker /

Mental Health (non-medical) Clinician if you would like to access the fund.

- Carer Gateway

Financial help can also be sought via the Carer Gateway. <https://www.carergateway.gov.au/>

**Ph: 1800 422 737** This help is not restricted to families with loved ones being managed in the public sector. In the past, there were two distinct different packages to the range of carers (not just in mental health) ie

- **tailored support packages up to \$1,500 for one off support and**
- **\$3,000 the specific criteria for this are unclear to me, but emergency respite / needs over the year may be possibilities.**

Both Carer Gateway and Tandem are organizations which all families and friends of individuals with mental health challenges must join. **Tandem** is both a strong voice advocating for carers in mental health and a source of assistance. Contact details:

<https://tandemcarers.org.au/>

Ph: Reception: 8803 5555

CSF: 8803 5504

Support/Referral:1800 314 325

**STAR HEALTH .....BETTER HEALTH NETWORK**

**Ph: 9525 1300** <https://www.starhealth.org.au/>

For the time being, Star Health remains the provider of a wide range of primary health care services, in a range of locations and assistance which includes:

- Mental Health,
- Drug and Alcohol,
- Child and Youth,
- Family Violence,
- Indigenous care,
- GP, Physical health, Covid,
- Gambling,
- NDIS,
- RhED (for sex workers)

An example of an important service offered by Star (and a range of other services across Victoria) is:

**Mental Health Integrated Complex Care (MHICC)**

services support clients with a severe mental illness who have complex needs and would benefit from improved coordination of their care over an extended period of time.

Four key elements of MHICC are designed to be highly flexible in their delivery to match an individual's needs:

- Mental health nursing services, including counselling
- Family support and liaison
- Care-coordination and liaison

- Improving access to health services; including psychiatrist and psychological care

To be eligible for MHCC via Star Health you need to:

- live or work in Kingston, Stonnington, Bayside or Glen Eira
- have a health care card or can't afford to access similar services, and
- not be eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) or Partners in Recovery (PiR).
- have an assessment and diagnosis of mental illness that is significantly impacting your social, personal or work life;
- have complex needs; and be at
- be at risk of hospitalisation if appropriate treatment and care is not provided
- have a GP, psychiatrist or relevant healthcare practitioner who is currently
- managing your care in a primary healthcare setting
- have a current GP Mental Health Treatment Plan, or equivalent plan prepared by a psychiatrist or relevant healthcare practitioner.

To Self-refer to MHICC from any Victorian location: Ph: 1800 862 363-M-F:8.30 am-4.30 pm but a referral from a medico / psychologist may speed up the process.

For information/ referral re MHICC via Star Health: <https://www.semphn.org.au/access-and-referral>

Better Health Network is a voluntary gradual union of Central Bayside Community Health Services (CBCHS), Connect Health & Community and Star Health to enable delivery of better coordinated services and health, wellbeing and support outcomes to more people across the inner south, and southeast suburbs of Melbourne. For the time being, each will continue operating as three individual organisations, with a staged amalgamation being planned.

**Family Led Carer Centres (FLCC)**

<https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/site-4/supporting-mental-health-families-and-carers>

These much-awaited outcomes of the Royal Commission are being established across Victoria. The team at Star Health is working hard to ensure that the FLCC for our area will be running asap. AMAH and ISFAF are well represented in the design team. We are very proud that our highly respected and loved committee member Tania Curlis, Director of Clarable <https://www.clarable.com.au/> is currently Lived and Living Experience Project Lead ensuring that our needs are very much at the forefront of the process. <https://www.starhealth.org.au/south-east-metro-carer-and-family-led-centre/>



Be Connected is an Australian government initiative committed to building the confidence, digital skills and online safety of older Australians. Whether you want to pick up new skills or dive into a new topic, you can access their free learning resources online or join one of the thousands of community organisations running free computer classes across Australia on a variety of topics including can you spot a scam, online shopping and banking, staying safe on Facebook, useful apps, using government websites and smart homes.

You can also access their podcast and many useful articles.

They also have a fun, online games centre.

To find out more, click [Be Connected | Free online courses for seniors \(esafety.gov.au\)](https://www.esafety.gov.au/be-connected)

### **SELF-CARE - ART FOR THE SOUL**

Penny Lewisohn has highlighted the coming exhibition of her daughter Alexandra's current work:

'Surrounds' at 'The Hive' May 5-28

1/41 Smithton Gr, Ocean Grove

10-4pm Friday to Sunday,

or by appointment – Call Karen on 0417 116 216

30 minutes from Geelong, 90 mins from Melbourne

All are very welcome, but please note that the exhibition space gallery is accessible only by stairs.

<https://thehiveoceangrove.com.au/>



'A' works from her studio in Daylesford, currently primarily in watercolour, gouache and oils, depending on the subject. As the pictures show, this exhibition presents beautiful paintings inspired by A's beloved garden.

### **DATES TO DIARIAZE**

Please check ISFAF website for updates

<https://ispaf.org/>

### **MAY**

**Tues 9:** Monthly Support Meeting

7.10 pm Light Supper

7.30 pm Forum on Housing

(see page 1 for details)

**Sun 21:** Performance of 'Beautiful Highness'

(see page 1 for details)

### **About the Play:**

Shelley – a spunky, wise-cracking battler – lives with a soundscape of non-stop 'Voices' plaguing her every waking minute. The only relief comes from weekly visits to see her kids who live with their Nana, daily phone calls to her siblings, and really, really loud music.

Based on a true story, **Beautiful Highness** centres around one family's incredible grit and determination dealing with mental ill-health. Unsentimental, heart-warming and gently humorous, the play crystallises just how important a sense of belonging and connection is for all of us. **Beautiful Highness** is an empathy recharge for those living with or supporting someone with a diagnosis; the family members, carers and practitioners.

**Written** by musical theatre and cabaret star, **Chelsea Plumley**, and featuring music and sound design by ARIA and APRA winner, **James Roche** (Bachelor Girl).

**Cast:** Michelle Stayner (*Blue Heelers, Halifax F.P., Carson's Law*), Petra Glieson (*Metro Sexual, It's A Date, The Dr Blake Mysteries*), Tanya Schneider (*Harrow, Metro Sexual, Heist*), Angela Kennedy (*Come From Away, Strictly Ballroom the Musical, Sons and Daughters*), Anthony Scundi (*Unsolicited Male, Nine – the Musical, Hurlyburly*), Jessica Faulkner (*The Inbestigators, Glitch, Mustangs FC*), and child actors Jasper McDonald Parsons and Alistair Herbert.

For further information, including description of content that may offend, please refer to:

<https://chapeloffchapel.com.au/show/beautiful-highness/>

### **ONGOING**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month: Walk n Chat**

Meet: Outside North Point Café  
(Beach end of North Rd Brighton)

Must Book - Ph 0425 723 746 in the morning.

Generally, walkers meet at 1pm,  
non-walkers at 2.15pm in café  
(refreshment funded by AHCS)

AlfredHealth  
Carer Services



#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month:**

#### **Monthly Support Meetings ....549 St Kilda Rd**

7.10pm ...Light Supper      7.30pm... Speaker  
(see page 1 for details)

