

# After-hours toolkit guide for residential aged care homes

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An instructional guide to help residential aged care homes develop their after-hours processes, plans and resources, to provide the most appropriate and effective healthcare to residents.

# Background

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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 of this initiative is to improve awareness of after-hours services and reduce unnecessary transfers to hospital especially when effective, and often superior, telehealth options are available.

Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (EMPHN) would like to acknowledge Primary Health Tasmania in the development of this work, and key work and collaborations by South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network, North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network and the Victorian Primary Health Network Alliance. The toolkit comprises four resources to support Residential Aged Care Homes (RACHs) in the after-hours period. These are intended to assist staff to identify the most appropriate after-hours service to use on each occasion it is required.

## How to use the after-hours toolkit

The after-hours toolkit has been developed following consultations with RACHs in metropolitan Melbourne and western Victoria, with the aim being to enhance after-hours processes and resources and reduce emergency presentations. It is informed by evidence-based resources to support RACHs to enhance access and use of after-hours services.


### **The toolkit:**

- ▶ provides guidance on creating appropriate after-hours plans for residents
- ▶ educates staff, families and carers 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, that are 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.

# After-hours toolkit components

Tool	Description	Where to access
 <p>After hours self-assessment tool</p>	<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. Use this to assess the status of your RACH's after-hours preparedness. It contains links to other helpful after-hours resources</p>	<p>Downloadable and printable version can be found <a href="#">here</a></p>
 <p>Medical support checklist</p>	<p>This tool is a checklist, based on the <a href="#">ISBAR communication tool</a>, 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 or VVED. For more information on examples of types of low to medium acuity conditions referred to in this resource, please visit: <a href="#">Medical referral options for residents in aged care homes</a>.</p>	<p>Downloadable and printable version can be found <a href="#">here</a></p>
 <p>Family and carer fact sheet</p>	<p>This fact sheet informs family members and carers of RACH residents about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ What happens when someone falls ill during the after-hours period.</li> <li>▶ What families and carers can do to help.</li> </ul>	<p>Downloadable and printable version can be found <a href="#">here</a></p>

## After-hours toolkit components (continued...)

Tool	Description	Where to access
 Service directory	<p>This is a central repository for services available in your region in the after-hours period. It has two components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. A locum or deputising and pharmacy service directory in which to list relevant services and contact details.</li><li>2. Other after-hours services.</li></ol>	<p>Downloadable and printable version can be found <a href="#">here</a></p>