

Following a period of co-design and competitive tendering process we were delighted to hear the announcement that Relationships Australia Victoria (RAV) will be the new provider as of July 1.

RAV have undertaken to ensure as much service continuity as possible and Berry Street, Open Place and RAV have been busy looking at how this transition to a new provider can happen as seamlessly as possible.

However, unfortunately we envisage some short-term disruption to the provision of some of our services while we transition between the two providers. We are aware that this is an additional disappointment during a time where COVID19 has also impacted some of the operations of Open Place.

At the time of writing this letter all our COVID restrictions remain in place until further notice. Please check the Open place website for updates.

The additional changes are:

- Effective immediately, the health team will be continuing to pay existing pharmaceutical accounts only.
- **All** other health related brokerage (funding) requests will go onto a wait list for consideration in the new financial year.
- Special consideration brokerage provided by the co-ordinated support team will also move to a wait list effective immediately.

The reason for this is that the existing brokerage budget has been overspent this financial year.

It is to be noted that at this point in time DHHS remain unable to confirm the total amount of ongoing brokerage into the new financial year. This may not be known until October. This means that moving forward with RAV, brokerage will continue to have some restrictions (to be advised).

We will know the outcome of budget decisions later in the year.

Counselling, records and redress services and will continue to operate as is.

It is anticipated that in addition to the above changes Open Place will be required to temporarily close all services for the last week of June 22-26 June, to finalise the transition and establishment of all required activities and resources including the transfer of IT systems, phones, equipment and personnel.

Any calls to the office will go to voice mail during this week and the team will regularly check.

We apologise for these changes however look forward to resuming Open Place alongside RAV as of 1 July and working together to continue to advocate for the needs of our Forgotten Australians and providing ongoing specialised support services.

Please find attached an introduction and update from RAV and a flyer relating to the transfer of personal information as we move from Berry street to RAV.

Stay well and we look forward to continuing to provide the Open Place specialist support service into the future.

The team at Open Place