

09/06/2020

Dear Open Place clients,

Relationships Australia Victoria (RAV) is pleased and privileged to have been selected by DHHS as the new provider of Open Place, as of 1 July 2020, and we very much look forward to supporting Open Place to deliver much valued services to you and all Open Place clients.

As a client of Open Place, we want to let you know a little bit about us as an organisation. We are proud to provide a diverse range of services for individuals, including children and adolescents, families and couples, including counselling, family dispute resolution (mediation), family violence services, relationship education and professional training. We support all members of the community, regardless of religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, lifestyle choice, cultural background or economic circumstances. We believe that people, in all their diversity, have the right to live their lives safely and with dignity, with their families and within their communities, and to enjoy positive, respectful, safe and fulfilling relationships. RAV has more than 70 years' experience delivering services, and we currently operate from 16 sites around metropolitan and regional Victoria, including our Central Office which is based in Camberwell.

We believe that Open Place will complement and fit well with our existing suite of services and we very much look forward to listening to you, enhancing our understanding, and supporting you.

Open Place remains a service for you and all Forgotten Australians and Pre-1990 Care Leavers - and we want this to be a service that works for those who use it.

We acknowledge Berry Street as the managing organisation of Open Place for the past 10 years and want to let you know that we intend to transition as many of the current staff as possible, and programs, and continue business as usual once the service is operated by RAV. As such, we will not make significant changes in the foreseeable future; we will continue to operate out of the same sites in Richmond and around Victoria where groups meet, and the Open Place staff will remain familiar faces where possible. That being said, we will certainly take onboard feedback received during the consultation process that occurred over the last year or so and consider this feedback to help enhance the service provision moving forward.

Naturally, in time and in consultation with service users, we might start to make some small changes if we find there are different or improved ways of doing some things, however we hope and expect that you will continue to find the service to be the same one with which you are comfortable and familiar and enjoy any agreed changes. If you haven't made contact with Open Place for a while, we certainly invite you to do so. We will provide you with opportunities to provide feedback to us about Open Place and your experience with it.

After we assume management of Open Place on 1 July, we will communicate more with you, and we will continue the newsletter that you have received in the past. If you are not currently receiving the Open Place newsletter and would like to do so, please contact us at openplace@rav.org.au. You can also find out more about our organisation, and about Open Place after 1 July, by visiting www.rav.org.au.

Please note, you should continue to access Open Place staff and supports as you normally do, whether by phone or email. However, there may be some service disruption in moving Open Place from Berry Street to RAV during the month of July. Apologies in advance, but unfortunately some short term service disruption may be unavoidable. Please check the Open Place website <https://openplace.org.au/> for up to date information concerning any short term service disruption.

The Open Place offices and Drop In centre will remain closed for the month of July due to the current COVID 19 environment. This will also allow us to progress some minor refurbishments and freshening of carpet and painting at Bromham Place.

We look forward to working with you in the future and providing support where it is needed.

Warm regards,



Michael Beres
General Manager Operations