

July 2025

Community Update

Last year, we proudly opened the dedicated Children's Emergency Department at University Hospital Geelong. This purpose-built facility features a paediatric triage system, assessment and waiting areas, and treatment rooms designed specifically for children and their families. Located just 100 metres from the main Emergency Department entrance, it's a vital addition to our local healthcare services.

In the recently announced 2025/26 State Budget, further investments have been made to expand and strengthen urgent care services across Victoria. I want to take this opportunity to outline the range of free healthcare resources available to Bellarine residents:

Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED)

The VVED offers free, online emergency care for non-life-threatening emergencies. Consultations are conducted via video and accessible from your smartphone or computer. Currently the VVED delivers care to more than 600 callers every day, and with the State Government's recent investment, this number will nearly triple in size.

Available 24/7

www.vved.org.au

Nurse-On-Call

This free helpline will connect you with a registered nurse who can provide expert medical advice on whether to seek further medical assistance and what is available locally.

Available 24/7

1300 60 60 24

Urgent Care Clinic

Urgent Care Clinics provide GP-led care for conditions that require urgent care but aren't emergencies such as mild infections, burns, sprains, or suspected fractures. Many clinics also offer onsite or nearby pathology and imaging services. The closest clinic for the Bellarine is in Belmont.

Open daily: 7.30am-9.30pm

75 Roslyn Road Belmont

03 4206 7366

Community Pharmacy Program

The Community Pharmacy Program started as a pilot program with pharmacists delivering free consultations for uncomplicated UTIs, resupply of some oral contraceptive pills, mild skin conditions and travel vaccinations at select pharmacies.

As part of the recent 2025/26 Budget this program will expand and become permanent from 1 July 2025. Over the next two years, additional common health conditions will be introduced into the program including nausea, minor wound management, allergies, reflux and school sores.

Most consultations will remain free for patients, helping local residents access the care they need here on the Bellarine without the cost of GP or consultation fees.



It's important to note, that this program does require pharmacists to undertake additional training to participate in the program. It can be best to call a listed pharmacy ahead of visiting to ensure a trained pharmacist is on duty to assist you.

Find out what local pharmacies are involved in the program at www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/community-pharmacy-pilot

1800 My Options

A free and confidential service offering advice and referrals for contraception, pregnancy options including abortion services, and sexual health.

[*www.1800myoptions.org.au*](http://www.1800myoptions.org.au)

1800 696 784

Available: 9am-5pm Monday to Friday

The Orange Door

A free service that coordinates family violence and child wellbeing support without needing a referral.

[*www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au*](http://www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au)

1800 312 820

Available 9am-5pm Monday to Friday

These services are here to make sure Bellarine residents can access the care they need close to home, while reducing pressure off our emergency departments and paramedics. Please share with your family and friends so they too can be aware of what free healthcare options are available locally.

If you need any assistance with any state matters, please contact my office on 03 5250 1987 or via email alison.marchant@parliament.vic.gov.au

