

Why are we changing?

At the Benevolent Society we are committed to the ongoing provision of our NSW specialist disability services to our current and future clients alike. This means as part of normal business we will continue to review how we best provide our services now and into the future.

What is changing?

From early June we will be implementing changes to our NSW specialist disability services. This will involve a reduction in staffing numbers and a merging of some offices. For the most part our services will remain unchanged and we will continue to service all of NSW and the ACT in the new operating model.

What may change for a small number of clients is their individual therapist or Support Coordinator and potentially the office location they are working from. This change will be made over a number of months to ensure a smooth transition. This is vital, as we understand the importance our clients place on the direct relationship with our staff.

From August onward, we will be reducing our number of Nurses and will not have Therapy Assistants as part of the team. If you are currently receiving these services, we will be in contact to assist you to find the ongoing support you need.

Will this affect my NDIS plan?

This will not in any way affect a client's NDIS plan, and in the main we will continue to offer our services unchanged – the only services that will not be offered moving forward is Nursing and clients who are receiving services via our Therapy Assistants. If you currently receive these services we will be in contact to assist you to find the ongoing support you require.

The provision of our core specialist disability services will remain unchanged, these include:

- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Speech Pathology
- Psychology
- Behavioural Support
- Support Coordination
- and Dietetics

Who is affected?

For the majority of clients there will be no change in service provision and we will continue to provide services in all areas of NSW and the ACT in the new operating model.

If your therapist is going to change you will be advised personally in the coming months, and the change of staff providing your service will take place by July 29.

At the Benevolent Society we are set up as a fully mobile workforce, what this means for you and your family is as we make changes to office locations this will not affect your service provision. Again, if your local office location is changing we will be personally in contact to confirm those changes, and for clients who receive services at a physical office location, we will be in contact to make arrangement to continue services in a location that works for you.

The planned office mergers for our staff are as follows:

- Bowral and Kingston offices will move to the Goulburn office
- Grafton and Port Macquarie offices will move to the Coffs Harbour office
- Lismore office will move to the Coolangatta office
- Wagga Wagga office will move to the Albury office
- Nowra office will be moving to the Wollongong office

How many Benevolent Society staff are affected?

Once all the changes have been made we expect there will be reduction in staff numbers, a number of staff members will change their office location.

What areas are affected?

At the Benevolent Society we are set up as a fully mobile workforce, what this means for our clients and their family is as we make changes to office locations this will not affect their service and we will continue to service all areas in NSW and the ACT in the new operating model.

In terms of our offices the following offices will remain unchanged:

- Albury
- Armidale
- Bathurst
- Bega
- Broadmeadow
- Broken Hill
- Coffs Harbour
- Coolangatta
- Dubbo
- East Maitland
- Glebe
- Gosford
- Goulburn
- Griffith
- Hurstville
- Inverell
- Liverpool
- Macquarie Park
- Mudgee
- Orange
- Tamworth
- Werrington
- Wollongong
- Moree
- Narrabri

Several offices will merge into another office location, these are as follows:

- Bowral and Kingston offices will move to the Goulburn office
- Grafton and Port Macquarie offices will move to the Coffs Harbour office
- Lismore office will move to the Coolangatta office
- Wagga Wagga office will move to the Albury office
- Nowra will be moving to the Wollongong office

In all cases we will be working with all our clients and families to ensure that they are aware of any impacts. For a small number of clients who receive their services at a physical office location that is moving or closing, we will be in contact and work with you to review the best options available.

Has the NDIA been informed?

We have officially advised the NDIA of these changes.

How are we supporting clients?

Our priority is to ensure continuity of service provision for our clients. For the majority of clients there will be no change to their service provision.

What may change for a small number of clients is their individual therapist or Support Coordinator and potentially the office location the therapist is working from. This change will be made over a number of months to ensure a smooth transition. This is vital as we understand the importance our clients place on the direct relationship with our staff.

From August onward, we will be reducing our number of Nurses and will not have Therapy Assistants as part of the team. If you are currently receiving these services, we will be in contact to assist you to find the ongoing support you need.

Where do I go to ask further questions?

We will be in contact with all clients over the next few months, but in the meantime if you have questions about your specific situation you can either email us at Disabilityclientinfo@benevolent.org.au or call us on 1800 236 762.

Our clients and service continuity is our priority over this period of change.