

Merri Health and
Banyule Community
Health are now



HOLSTEP HEALTH FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – Updated 3 March 2025

Question	Response
What is Holstep Health?	<p>Banyule Community Health and Merri Health have joined – together we are now Holstep Health. We’ve united to provide a healthier future for our communities!</p> <p>We are stronger together, with great people, shared values, complementary services and a genuine commitment to our communities. As Holstep Health, we will be able to improve our community services and grow into the future.</p> <p>Banyule Community Health and Merri Health officially merged in October 2024. In February this year we announced our new name Holstep Health. Holstep Health reflects our deep commitment to holistic, wrap-around care that supports every aspect of a person’s well-being—physical, mental, social, financial, and legal.</p>
What has changed?	<p>New name. More expert care. Same services, at the same locations, with the same friendly faces you enjoy now! Our name has changed and we have a vision to improve healthcare for our communities. The merger means we will be able to grow in the future. Together, we will have a stronger voice for our communities. We are excited about opportunities for our people to work and grow together.</p>
Where will services be delivered from?	<p>Holstep Health will continue to provide services from their current locations and are deeply committed to servicing communities locally. Our intention is to maintain and/or grow our current programs and services; and for staff to continue to work from their current locations and community to visit their usual site.</p>
Will my doctor, dentist or other health professional change?	<p>No, we continue to provide our same services, with the same friendly expert staff, at the same locations you enjoy now. Some things are changing, but all the best bits remain the same!</p>
How can I make appointments?	<p>You continue to make appointments in exactly the same way. For appointments and help at West Heidelberg or Greensborough, phone (03) 9450 2000 and for Brunswick, Brunswick West, Coburg, Preston, Fawkner, Glenroy and Wangaratta, phone 1300 637 744.</p>

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Will Holstep Health cost me more money?	No. Nothing is changing for fees and billing. Fees may change in accordance to standard practices and costs over time.
Can I access legal services even though I do not live in Banyule?	Currently, West Heidelberg Community Legal is only funded to help those living in Banyule or Nillumbik. But if they cannot provide you with legal assistance, West Heidelberg Community Legal intake and access staff and volunteers can give you information about where you can get legal help. They can be contacted on 9450 2002.
Can I refer across to another service?	Over the next two years, services across all our locations will begin to come together. Currently we are unable to refer patients across from West Heidelberg to our other locations in Coburg, West Brunswick, Fawkner, Preston, Brunswick and Glenroy (and vice-versa) but we are looking forward to being able to do so more easily in the future.
Why are you called Holstep Health?	<p>The new name was developed through extensive consultation, with input from more than 300 clients, community members, partners and employees!</p> <p>Holstep Health shows our deep commitment to holistic, wrap-around care that supports every aspect of a person’s well-being—physical, mental, social, financial, and legal.</p> <p>“<i>Hol</i>” comes from <i>holistic</i>, representing our approach to treating the whole person with wrap-around care. It highlights our belief that health is interconnected, and true care requires attention to all areas of a person's life.</p> <p>“<i>Step</i>” symbolises partnership and progress. Each step represents the journey we take together with our clients, walking alongside them through every stage of their health journey. We’re with you as your needs change, helping you step toward a healthier future.</p> <p>“<i>Community care. For life.</i>” reinforces our deep connection and commitment to providing expert local care at all stages of life.</p>
Why did Banyule Community Health and Merri Health merge?	As Holstep Health, we can offer services to a bigger area and have greater voice and strength in health services. The way community health services work continues to evolve and change. Both Banyule Community Health and Merri Health have been part of successful mergers in the past, and seen other services have a positive impact on their communities through joining together in this way.

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	By working together as Holstep Health, we can achieve more. We can be more capable and responsive to the current and future needs of our clients, staff, funders and most importantly, our communities.
When did you merge?	Banyule Community Health and Merri Health officially merged in October 2024. In February this year we announced our new name Holstep Health.
Is this as a result of reduced funding streams or government policy?	No. Whilst the Community Health sector has faced a number of challenges, the merger is the next stage of both organisation's evolutions and will help to ensure that we remain strong and sustainable in the future.
Who is CEO?	Our CEO is Tassia Michaelas, former CEO of Merri Health. Michael Geary, former CEO of Banyule Community Health is our Executive Director of Strategy and Impact.
Have other Community Health Services merged? Were they successful?	Yes. There are several examples of successful Community Health Services that have merged. This includes Sunbury Cobaw Community Health in 2021, DPV Health (from Dianella & Plenty Valley) in 2018 and Cohealth (from North Yarra, Doutta Galla & Western Region) in 2014.
Is this just a step towards privatisation?	No. Holstep Health will remain a non-profit organisation closely aligned with our government partners and community.
Did you merge because of the hospital funding issues in Victoria?	No, the Victorian State Government is currently conducting a review on Health Services (hospitals). Community Health Services are not in scope, however the State Government plans reflect the evolving needs in the health sector.
Some staff finished up recently. Is this because of the merger?	No, both Banyule Community Health and Merri Health have a wide range of funded services by governments and other bodies (over 100 different funding streams combined). From time to time there is change in funding conditions. The recent changes that have been made are reflective of these funding changes and staff have been informed of the change and supported.