

Frequently Asked Questions

General questions about Family Therapy at The Bouverie Centre

Detailed information about our Family Therapy Service can be found on our [website here](#).

What is RAFT?

RAFT, or Rapid and Accessible Family Therapy is what we call our service. All families who attend the Bouverie Centre will attend RAFT. The main steps that you can expect when you have Family Therapy at the Bouverie Centre are outlined on our [Family Services page here](#).

Where can I access your Terms of Service?

Our Terms of Service is available to read on our website, [here](#).

What is the cost of your service?

Our service is funded by the Victorian Department of Health and provided at no cost to families who meet our eligibility requirements and who agree to our [Terms of Service](#).

Who do we see when we come in for therapy?

Families are generally seen by one or two qualified family therapists, depending on the number of family members attending and the nature of their concerns. If you or someone in your family identifies as First Nations and you choose to see a First Nations worker, you would be seen by our [Working with the Mob Team](#).

Families coming through our Masters Program Clinic are seen by an experienced professional undertaking specialised postgraduate training in family therapy.

Where are face-to-face appointments held?

In-person family therapy sessions are held at The Bouverie Centre, 8 Gardiner Street, Brunswick VIC 3056 between the hours of 9am and 5pm from Monday to Friday.

Can I see a First Nations therapist?

Our specialist team of First Nations and non-First Nations family therapists see families where any member of the family identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. We will ask you whether you would prefer a First Nations worker when you call us. [Click here for further information](#).

The Bouverie Centre: Where Families Matter



Who do you see? What is your eligibility criteria?

We see Victorian families seeking support for their well-being and relationships, in light of challenges related to a member's diagnosed mental health condition, or alcohol and other drug problem, and/or past trauma or abuse. We provide specialist family therapy services for First Nations and LGBTIQ+ families who are [eligible for our service](#).

Some limits and practicalities:

- We are a tertiary service which means family members have usually sought help from another mental health or primary care service before us.
- We cannot offer individual therapy, couples therapy or services related to active or pending Family Court proceedings, or the implementation of Parenting Orders (Consent or Court).
- We cannot offer a family therapy service in situations of serious current family violence.
- For all families not eligible for our service we actively refer families to an appropriate service/practitioner.
- We mostly offer sessions during business hours, Monday to Friday. The Family Therapy Teaching Clinic can sometimes offer a 7:30am or 5.15pm appointment on Wednesdays & Thursdays.
- Before we schedule an appointment, your family members need to agree to attend sessions together.

What can't you help with?

We cannot offer individual therapy, couples therapy or services related to active or pending Family Court proceedings, or the implementation of Parenting Orders (Consent or Court). We cannot offer a family therapy service in situations of serious current family violence.

The reason we do not offer these services is because this is not what The Bouverie Centre specialises in, and it is not what the Department of Health funds us to do. We encourage you to view our list of [alternative service providers](#) who specialise in these fields. If that doesn't help, please [contact us](#) and you can speak to our Family Care Coordinator who may be able to provide relevant alternative options.

Can The Bouverie Centre arrange an interpreter for individuals or families from non-English backgrounds?

We can arrange an interpreter to assist with communication during all sessions and phone calls. We will need a week's notice to do this, so please let us know when you contact us.

Do all family members need to attend?

Before we schedule an appointment, at least two family members need to agree to attend sessions together. Our Family Care Coordinator will check this with you when they speak with you. As long as it is safe to do so, families are more likely to achieve better outcomes if all affected family members attend together.

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www.latrobe.edu.au/bouverie
PHONE +61 (03) 8481 4800

The Bouverie Centre, January 2025



Why do we need to complete questionnaires?

We ask that all family members answer some questions at different times during their care with us. We ask everyone to complete them on their own before and after their first session, then again when you finish family therapy with The Bouverie Centre.

The questionnaires help with three things:

1. They give everyone a voice about how things are in the family at the moment, and what positive change would look like.
2. They help our therapist/s get a sense of how your whole family is travelling.
3. They give the Bouverie Centre information on the needs of families who come to us.

Your answers are only used for these purposes and remain private. If you need help to complete this questionnaire, your Family Care Coordinator can assist with this.

The primary contact for your family will need to complete and return the pre-session questionnaire before we can confirm your first appointment. We will also send a shorter version of the questionnaire to each member of the family attending Bouverie's family therapy service.

Do you see children?

We see children of all ages in the context of family difficulties. We do not see children individually. If you have concerns, it's good to talk through what might be a constraint for your child attending first with our Family Care Coordinator or with a therapist.

Can some family members be from interstate?

Only one attending family member is required to be living in Victoria. Some or all family members can attend remotely from rural/regional areas or interstate via Telehealth.

Can Bouverie arrange an interpreter?

We can arrange an interpreter for all sessions. We will need a week's notice to do this, so please let us know when you contact us.

Are you able to reach out to family members on my/our behalf?

No, we do not reach out to other family members to participate in Family Therapy. There may be some exceptions to this. You and your Family Care Coordinator can discuss this during your first phone call.

Before we schedule an appointment, at least two family members need to agree to attend sessions together.

What happens in a family therapy session?

At the start of your session your therapist/s will usually ask each person what they would like to achieve from it. As you explore the issues during the session, everyone will be given the opportunity to have their say. With your hopes for the session in mind, your therapist/s will also share their ideas about what might help.

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How long do sessions go for and when are they held?

Sessions are approximately 60–90 minutes. Our WIT clinics operate on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and any subsequent sessions can occur Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

How long do families attend for and at what frequency?

Fifty percent of families only attend for 1- 2 sessions. On average, families attend between one and six sessions, with sessions being spaced 2- 4 weeks apart depending on what the family requires. We work collaboratively with the family to determine how many sessions are needed and can work with families for [up to 10 sessions over the span of a calendar year](#).

You can choose to stop attending The Bouverie Centre at any time, ideally deciding together with your therapist. When you stop attending our service and there is no contact with The Bouverie Centre for three months, we will close your case. You are welcome to contact our Centre again in the future, and we will reassess your family's needs and our service availability at that time.

Is there a maximum number of people who can attend a session?

We generally like to meet all family members within a household, and we work collaboratively with the family to see who should attend each session. We aim to get as many perspectives as possible, while also assessing relationship safety.

What if one of the members of our family refuses to come?

If a family member does not want to attend, we will respect their decision. Their point of view is valued and they will always be welcome in future sessions providing it is safe for them and for others.

What if someone in our family doesn't want someone else to attend?

We encourage you to discuss this with the Family Care Coordinator before an appointment to avoid putting anyone in a situation where they feel physically or emotionally unsafe.

Is there a waitlist?

The Bouverie Centre does not have a waitlist. Our intention is to respond in a rapid and accessible way by seeing families within three weeks of contact. We can only see up to 6 new families per week, however, we open new sessions each week. If we do not have any appointments available when you call, we will invite you to call us back the next week.

How can I reschedule my appointment?

To reschedule your appointment, please call reception on 03 8481 4800. We ask that you give us as much notice as possible so we can offer your appointment time to another family.

Can Bouverie recommend other services that may be suitable for my family?

If it doesn't look like Bouverie is the right fit for your family right now, the Family Care Coordinator will provide referral options.

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What technical equipment do I need for online sessions?

- Our appointments can be offered by telehealth. We use Zoom for this. To join a zoom call, you will need:
- Your own desktop computer, laptop or tablet (mobile phone is not advised unless each family member has their own device)
- An internet connection – broadband or wireless
- Speakers and a microphone – built-in or USB plug-in or wireless Bluetooth
- A webcam
- Zoom program downloaded on your computer, tablet or mobile device. Download for free from <https://zoom.us/download>

If you have any questions, or need help setting this up, our Family Care Coordinator can help.

When and how will I get my Zoom link?

You will receive an email a couple of days before your appointment with your zoom link.

Is there an option to have our WIT in person?

Yes, we offer both telehealth and in person WIT sessions.

Can family members attend online sessions on the same device?

Your own desktop computer, laptop or tablet is recommended (mobile phone is not advised unless each family member has their own device), however, children may share a device with another family member.

Is parking available at The Bouverie Centre?

Yes, onsite, free parking is available at The Bouverie Centre during business hours.

Will I receive appointment confirmation or reminders?

You will receive an appointment confirmation within a few days of your appointment.

How will my privacy be protected?

Our [Terms of Service](#) outlines our storage, use, privacy and confidentiality statement.

Can I access my records?

Family members may access the information that you provided on the registration form, and your therapist's notes pertaining to the sessions you attended can be viewed in the presence of a therapist from The Bouverie Centre. Permission to release a therapist's notes can only be given if all family members who attended sessions give written permission. Clients seeking further access can apply in writing to us under the Freedom of Information Act. More information can be found in our [Terms of Service](#).

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What if I'm not happy with the service I'm getting?

We recognise that family therapy can sometimes be challenging and are committed to providing the best care and service possible. We welcome feedback about your experience with us.

If you are not satisfied with our service, and are not able to resolve the matter directly with your therapist, please contact us. Feedback or concerns regarding the service you are receiving can also be made directly to the Family Care Coordinator in the first instance, or to the Head of Family Therapy Services. Email Martin Pradel, or call (03) 8481 4800.

If you remain dissatisfied with our response, you may contact the Health Complaints Commissioner (HCC). The HCC responds to complaints about health services and the handling of health information in Victoria. Their service is free, confidential and impartial. To lodge a complaint with the HCC: fill out a complaint form online on the HCC website or Phone 1300 582 113 between 9 am and 5 pm, Monday to Friday, to discuss your complaint.

Is my data used for clinical research and if so, can I opt out?

More information about how we store and use your data can be found in our Terms of Service.

What is the purpose of a phone call with the Family Care Coordinator?

Before you attend a family therapy session, you will speak to our Family Care Coordinator who is an experienced clinician. They will ask some questions about you and your family to check whether Bouverie is the right service for you at this time. If it looks like Bouverie may be a good fit for your family, we will then help to prepare you for your first session with us.

If it doesn't look like Bouverie is the right fit right now, the Family Care Coordinator will provide alternative referral options for you that fits your family's needs at this time.

Can I attend my Family Care Coordinator appointment in person?

Our Family Care Coordinator will call you on the telephone at your appointment time. Please do not attend The Bouverie Centre in person.

How long will the Family Care Coordinator call take?

Please allow up to 20 minutes for the phone call. It may be less depending on your family's needs.

Do all family members need to be present for the Family Care Coordinator call?

Only one family member needs to attend the Family Care Coordinator call.

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