

SRS spring newsletter

Information for supported residential services
September 2018

Thunderstorm Asthma

People who have asthma or hay fever can get severe asthma symptoms during pollen season from October through to December. Thunderstorm asthma events occur when a large number of people develop asthma symptoms over a short period of time, these events are caused by high amounts of grass pollen and a certain type of thunderstorm.

While thunderstorm asthma events are rare, **it's important that you, your staff and any residents who have asthma or hay fever know about thunderstorm asthma, and what they can do to protect themselves**, this includes:

- have an asthma action plan (if a resident is advised to do so by their GP) and have this attached to the resident's support plan
- remind residents to carry their asthma reliever medication with them
- have reliever medication available and ensure staff can support residents to administer it (ideally with a spacer)
- know the four steps of asthma first aid
- where possible, **avoid being outside during thunderstorms from October through to December.**

Please review information about thunderstorm asthma:

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/thunderstorm-asthma>

Please review information about emergency asthma first aid:

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/asthma-emergency-first-aid>

Financial administrators

If a resident has been appointed a financial administrator, for example State Trustees, proprietors need to ensure a copy of the resident's residential and services agreement (RSA) is provided to the financial administrator to sight. Financial administrators are appointed to make financial decisions on behalf of individuals who due to disability or illness are unable to manage their financial affairs.

Snapshot of the SRS sector, 2017-2018

	2017-18 total
SRS closures	2
SRS change of ownership	10
Complaints received by the department	159
Prescribed reportable incidents	175
Community visitor notifications received by the department	26

New training: Recognising and reporting changes in residents' health

The department is funding Latrobe University to deliver four, **two day** workshops during 2018-19.

Recognising and reporting changes in residents' health aims to assist SRS staff providing support to older people, to be able to recognise when a residents' health has changed, and report this to the appropriate person in the facility.

The workshop includes 8 modules:

- communication
- wellbeing
- movement and mobility
- skin condition
- breathing
- eating, drinking and elimination
- mental awareness
- end of life

Each module supports an understanding of:

- how the body system works
- the aging process and what happens to the body
- how to recognise a change in a resident's health and wellbeing
- how to report these changes verbally and in writing.

Venue: Centre for Adult Education (CAE)
253 Flinders Lane, Melbourne

Dates for 2018

- 18th and 25th of October
- 5th and 12th of December
- 2019 dates TBC

Personal support coordinators and personal support workers working with older residents in SRS are encouraged to attend, however all SRS staff are welcome.

*This training can be counted towards the 40 hours training requirement for personal support coordinators.

Register via the LASA website:
<https://lasa.asn.au/supported-residential-services-training/>



Online resources for SRS staff: type two diabetes and healthy eating

Merri Health has developed two short videos, which are available on their website:

- Healthy eating in SRS
- Type two diabetes for staff working in SRS

SRS staff can register to view the videos via the link below:

www.merrihealth.org.au/services/mental-health/mental-health-support/supported-residential-services/srs-videos-resources

SRS within Merri Health's catchment area may request further assistance from health professionals at Merri Health. SRS in other health service catchment areas may approach their local community health centre for further advice.

SAVVI assisted facilities can contact their partnership manager for information about community health services in their area.

The SRS website

Important information, including guidelines and publications are available on the SRS webpage.

The '**Operating an SRS**' page can be found via the SRS homepage and includes information about:

- incidents in SRS
- emergency planning
- community visitors
- SRS training
- variation of registration
- under one roof
- supporting residents' health
- forms and templates
- useful contacts
- electronic version of ***Operating a Supported Residential Service: a guide for proprietors (the orange book)***

Supporting residents' health includes information about Dental health services in Victoria and the Pension level SRS Oral health promotion initiative.

www2.health.vic.gov.au/ageing-and-aged-care/supported-residential-services

Occupational health and safety (OH&S)

All employers within Australia are required to maintain safe workplaces for their employees. All employees are required to follow safe work practices, and to report safety concerns in their workplace to their employers.

SRS staff are exposed to the following risks:

- sustaining injuries from work that involves manual handling, for example supporting a resident to move or to shower
- sustaining psychological injuries from exposure to occupational violence, for example being verbally threatened by a resident or family member.

OH&S legislation requires that employers implement strategies to reduce risks to staff, such as those mentioned above. The following steps can be taken in SRS to reduce the risk of physical injury to staff.

Where a resident requires physical support to move:

- consult with allied health professionals (such as occupational therapists or physiotherapists) regarding the resident's support needs
- ensure staff are trained in how to support the resident, allied health professionals can provide this type of training
- include recommendations made by health professionals in the resident's ongoing support plan
- ensure that appropriate equipment is available, and staff are trained in its use
- ensure there are sufficient numbers of staff on duty to meet the support needs of residents.

Work Safe Victoria regulates all Victorian workplaces to ensure compliance with OH&S legislation. Worksafe inspectors have powers to visit and inspect Victorian workplaces at any time.

For more information about preventing workplace injuries visit:

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/aged-care>

For information about preventing and responding to occupational violence:

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/occupational-violence-and-aggression>

Record keeping in SRS

SRS proprietors are required to store all SRS records for seven years, as outlined in section 78 of the Act.

This includes proprietors who are no longer operating an SRS. In situations where an SRS changes ownership, the exiting proprietor must take all SRS records created during their proprietorship with them; they remain responsible for ensuring that all records related to their operational period are stored for seven years.

The new proprietor is responsible for establishing all the required records, this includes new residential and services agreements, and new ongoing support plans for all residents.

Records also need to be readily available to authorised officers at any time for the purposes of monitoring compliance with the SRS legislation.

Notices to vacate

All SRS residents are protected solely by the tenancy provisions in the *Supported Residential Services (Private Proprietors) Act 2010 (the Act)*; this includes residents who receive individualised support packages.

The following tenancy protections are outlined in the Act:

- notices to vacate can only be issued under certain grounds
- notices to vacate can be challenged by residents in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)
- tenure information must be provided to prospective residents and included within the RSA.

Additional provisions exist to protect residents whose health care or support needs can no longer be provided for by the SRS; a notice to vacate can **only** be issued under these grounds after the following criteria have been met:

- reasonable steps have been taken by the proprietor to ensure the appropriate health care or personal support is provided to the resident
- the proprietor has notified the department, outlining that the resident's health care or support needs have exceeded what can be provided and/or arranged for by the SRS
- the department has arranged for the appropriate assessments and determined that the SRS can no longer ensure the health care or support needs of the resident can be provided for.

In this situation the department will take steps to refer the resident to the appropriate healthcare professionals.

Should you need any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact the department.

Resident Experience Survey

The department is currently conducting a survey of residents living in SRS to find out about their experiences of living in and receiving supports from SRS.

The information obtained from the survey will be used to inform policy and regulatory practice.

The resident experience survey is voluntary and confidential; all responses will be de-identified.

Researchers from Ipsos, an independent research company have been visiting a sample of SRS to provide residents with the opportunity to participate in the survey. The researchers will support residents who need assistance to complete the survey.

The department thanks SRS for participating in the project.

Letter to proprietors May 2018 - offence to operate unregistered supported residential service.

Thank you to those proprietors who contacted the department to discuss the contents of the letter sent to proprietors in May 2018 about operating SRS and alternative accommodation models.

The department will be taking proactive steps in relation to this matter after September 2018. If you have any enquiries about the content of the letter, or you seek another copy, please email srs@dhhs.vic.gov.au

Information from State Trustees

Do you have a will yet?

Have you thought about what it means for your family if something unexpected should happen to you and your partner? Now is the time to get sorted with a Will.

Making your Will is one of the most important things you'll ever do, so don't put it off any longer.

Having a clearly written and up-to-date Will is important because it:

- Outlines who you want to benefit from your estate
- Allows you to nominate a guardian for your children
- Sets out how you wish to distribute your property and possessions
- Reduces potential conflict after you're gone
- Helps your executor understand how you would like your affairs managed

Making your Will is just the first step. Make sure that you keep it up-to-date with each major life event that occurs.

For example, when you get married or divorced, when you have children or grandchildren, if you suddenly acquire a significant asset; such as a property, or your beneficiary falls ill or dies.

A Will becomes useless if no one knows that it exists or where to find it when the need arises. Store your Will in a safe place, such as our Victorian Will Bank and let someone you trust know about it.

You can safely store your Will with State Trustees' Will Bank for free and retrieve it at any time to make any necessary changes.

No matter what your circumstances are, we can help you prepare your Will.

Call us today on 03 9667 6444 for a confidential discussion or you can download a Will kit [here](#).

