

PROSPECTIVE RESIDENT INFORMATION

THE FACILITY:

The Farm in Galong (The Farm) is a not-for-profit charitable residential facility for women situated about an hour and a half from Canberra in the village of Galong, NSW. The site is a three-hectare property that was formerly a convent and is surrounded by a large garden.

THE PROGRAM:

The Farm provides assistance to women to achieve abstinence from alcohol and other drug use and to gain the skills needed to sustain permanent recovery. It is a long-term program and prospective residents should be aware that the duration of the program is on average at least twelve months. This is to ensure that residents are properly addressing the issues that have brought them into recovery.

The Farm has a particular focus on women who have had children removed from their care and works with relevant stakeholders towards the restoration of children to their mothers where possible.

Our program is based on the Therapeutic Community method of addiction treatment, and it focuses on increasing self-efficacy in women through the development of ordered and productive behaviours. These include continued abstinence from drugs and alcohol; a sense of self-worth and initiative; and a desire to make a meaningful contribution to the society. For a detailed explanation of the Therapeutic Community method, please see The Farm's website: www.thefarmingalong.com.au.

Residents live a life of regular study, reflection, and manual work. They maintain an attitude of willingness, openness, and honesty as they progress through the program, engaging with the life of the community as fully as possible.

The qualified staff at The Farm counsel and assist women to reach goals pertinent to their needs. They focus on the strengths of the individual and their innate potential and dignity, leaving their pasts behind.

Family visitation and involvement are an important component of the program and management works to help residents engage regularly and productively with those close to them.

PROGRAM FEES:

The Farm charges all residents 80% of their Centrelink benefit or equivalent towards food, accommodation, and treatment costs. The balance of a resident's Centrelink benefit is kept in a trust account for the individual's personal expenditure or savings. *If you are being breached by Centrelink, you are required to inform The Farm during your application process.*

Private payment is also accepted. Please contact The Farm to discuss other fee payment options.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS:

Individual Counselling Sessions

Residents have one-to-one counselling sessions. Counsellors are fully qualified and accredited and undergo required clinical supervision regularly.

Group Therapy

Group sessions are held regularly. These are a chance for residents to explore any particular issues that may be affecting them such as understanding boundaries, co-dependency and addiction; the nature of trauma; anger management; assertiveness; and complicated grief.

Independent Learning

Residents work through learning modules at their own pace. These are targeted to their unique needs and aim at addressing any underlying and ongoing problems that are preventing full participation in life. They form part of the 'permanence' ethos of the program, the aim of which is to train residents in independent management of anything in their temperament or psychological make-up that is getting in the way of the achievement of their full potential.

Learning modules include:

- On-line mental health self-help modules
- On-line literacy and IT skills modules
- In-house seminars on philosophy, the therapeutic community model and relapse prevention.

Case Management

Residents at The Farm receive individual case management to ensure a consistent focus on individual goals. This normally involves attention to and assistance with legal and financial matters, further education, budgeting, housing, prospective employment, and reunification with children and other family members.

Skills for Living

Residents live in the community in conscious awareness of one another in line with the ethos of the Therapeutic Community. There are regular community meetings in which they take an active part. They also take increasing levels of responsibility in the management of the facility, being promoted to more complex duties as they give evidence of competence in less difficult ones. This prepares residents for the real life of the workforce where successful task fulfilment is noticed and rewarded with promotion.

Residents are also actively engaged in the day to day running of The Farm. This includes shopping, developing menus, cooking, and the care and maintenance of the property and animals.

On entering the program, women are assigned a mentor. This is usually someone who has been on the program for a suitable amount of time and has the qualities needed to guide and assist the newcomer as she is finding her feet in the community.

Residents are encouraged to develop the spiritual component of their personality through the opportunities provided for prayer and meditative self-awareness. The beautiful chapel on the grounds

is a help to this. They also study a course of philosophy (ethics) to guide them in understanding the conditions that are conducive to human flourishing.

The development of life skills in the context of a caring and attentive community helps the transition to independent living at the end of the program.

Getting Ready for Work

An important goal of the program is to equip women with the tools they need to secure good employment. We believe work is an aid to permanent recovery as it provides women with both the material means they need for a good life as well as a sense of dignity and purpose. It can also be a means of developing positive social networks. As women progress through the program, they are encouraged to consider their vocations and to begin a course of study in a chosen area of interest. These are normally done through online TAFE, but other education providers are also considered.

STAGED ENTRY

It is important for the resident to use her time at The Farm to develop self-awareness and set future goals. There also needs to be a commitment to recovery and a willingness to stay for the duration of the program. We realise this is a big decision. That is why we have staged entry into the program to give residents an initial period to settle into the program. This staged entry also assists us in our treatment matching process.

Stage One

Stage One involves the resident in her acceptance of the need for community support to sustain permanent recovery and a willingness to commit to the abstinence-based lifestyle she has achieved in prior settings.

This is a six-week course aimed at the development of deeper self-awareness and the identity of personal goals. We ask that clients persevere to the end of the six weeks. During this initial stage of the program outside contact is restricted and there will be no internet access. Those clients with children may contact them but otherwise this is a time of undisturbed orientation to the Farm.

Stage Two

At Stage Two the client is ready for deeper work and to allow residents, peers and caseworkers to contribute to the further development of the self-knowledge that is necessary to sustain recovery. Entry to Stage Two is dependent on community assessment of the individual's need, motivation and capacity to continue in the program.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY:

To participate in the program the resident would fit the following profile (with assessment of people on a needs basis as well):

- The applicant has had a problem drug and/or alcohol using history longer than two years,
- The applicant is female and 20 years of age or older,
- The applicant has been assessed as being motivated to change,
- The applicant has a sign off from a GP to say they can live in a remote area,
- The applicant does not have a major psychiatric condition. *A major psychiatric condition is a mental health condition that The Farm is not equipped to manage due to staffing constraints and our remote location. Examples of major psychiatric conditions include bi-polar disorder, schizophrenia, eating disorders, autism spectrum disorder and major depressive disorder.*

THE ADMISSION PROCESS:

At the Farm, we understand that accessing treatment can sometimes be a complex and daunting process. Our experienced team at The Farm understand this and will be there to support you through every step of your application and admission journey.

PHONE INTERVIEW:

The journey to The Farm begins with an initial interview on the phone by calling 0404 112 428 or 02 6386 7275. As a part of this interview, we will require some information about you to ensure that you receive the best treatment options tailored to your needs. This initial assessment allows us to get an understanding of the issues impacting your health and wellbeing. The initial interview allows for a preliminary assessment to see if the program suits your needs.

Please note that if the program does not suit your needs, your journey with The Farm does not end here. The Farm will continue to support you by offering referral services to alternative treatment services that may better suit your needs and journey to recovery. We may ask you to complete a detoxification program before coming to The Farm.

If you still want to proceed with your application, you are required to keep in touch with The Farm by phone once a week on either number.

INITIAL APPLICATION:

Once you have completed the initial phone interview, you will be asked to complete an application form. Please be honest in your responses, as your honesty will assist us in determining your treatment needs. This will maximise your chances of a successful treatment outcome. Clients may choose to complete this application by themselves or with the help of a staff member.

We may also ask you to complete a Consent to Share information so that we can contact any people to better understand your situation e.g., Lawyer, Case Managers etc.

You may be asked to provide us with a report from your GP or health professional. It is up to you to get this done as soon as possible after the initial interview.

PRE-ADMISSION:

Once you have received and signed your Offer of Placement, you are in the pre-admission stage. In this stage, we will support you in making sure you are fully prepared before starting your journey to recovery at the Farm. This may involve tying up any loose ends with domestic, financial, and legal issues and/or getting the required documentation organised before coming to The Farm.

Required Documentation

All residents must also have the following documentation ready before they come to The Farm:

- 100 points of identification. We need minimum of 100 points of identification from primary and secondary documents e.g., Birth Certificate, Medicare Card, Driver's Licence, Proof of Age Card, Bank ATM key card, credit card, Passport etc. This points system is the same as required by Centrelink and many other organisations who need to confirm your identity.
- A current Medicare Card.
- Health Care Card or Pension Card (if you are in of a Centrelink benefit). If you do not have a health care card, you are required to obtain a Proof of Benefits card from Centrelink which has your CRN number and expiry date attached.
- All medication and current medication scripts (if applicable).
- A Doctor's letter, giving written approval for you to live in remote area.
- A copy of your Mental Health Treatment Plan

CLIENT RE-ENTRY:

Some clients who leave the organisation may need to re-enter at some future stage. The process for re-entry to the organisation will be made as simple and as streamlined as possible. The Farm in Galong ensures that a fair and non-discriminatory process is adopted when a past and potential client chooses to, or is required to, re-enter the service.

Clients will follow intake, assessment, referral and waiting list processes in order to re-enter services. Re-entry strategies include:

- Review previous files/records on re-entry – clients will not have to tell their history/story again if re-entry is within one year
- Make contact with any other organisations or stakeholders involved to identify the triggers for re-entry (item subject to client consent)
- Review the previous treatment plan to identify what strategies worked and those that didn't work
- Where possible and appropriate, the same worker will be allocated to the client.

RE-ENTRY TIMEFRAME

If a past and potential client wishes to re-enter the organisation service or programs, the timeframe to assess their re-entry processes will be linked to their reason for exit.

The timeframe to re-enter services include:

- » When a client completes the program. Clients who successfully complete the organisation programs are reserved the right to return to the organisation for a period of six months after

formally exiting from the service. Following this timeframe, the client file is closed and a new intake and assessment will need to be undertaken.

- » When a client exits by own choice. For a period of three months after formally exiting from the service, the client reserves the right to return to the organisation, without having to go through a full assessment process. Following this timeframe, the client file is closed and a new intake and assessment will need to be undertaken if the client requires to access the service at some point in the future.
- » When a client exits by voluntary transfer to another agency. Staff members will continue to follow-up with the client and liaise with the new service provider for a six week period to facilitate a smooth transition. After this timeframe, if the client wishes to re-enter the organisation, a new intake application will need to be completed.
- » Involuntary client exit. For a period of six weeks after formally being discharged from the service, the client reserves the right to return to the organisation; a new intake application and assessment will need to be completed.

The decision to reintegrate a client who has been involuntary exited must be authorised by the CEO and will depend on:

- WHS issues for staff and other clients
- Severity of actions
- Needs of the client
- Other client health issues

QUALITY ASSURANCE

- Access to health care is a routine part of the program.
- There are documented policies on aspects relevant to quality assurance, such as occupational health and safety, equal employment opportunity, confidentiality of residents' records, staff training and qualifications etc.
- There are written, agreed upon and well- known procedures for management of residents' affairs, such as admission and discharge, management of residents' finances, arrangements for outings and visitors, complaints and appeals procedures.
- Residents are given a document clearly identifying their rights, and have these rights explained to them on entry to the Farm.
- The right of residents to control the extent of disclosure in group settings of sensitive personal information that is relevant to treatment is respected.
- Residents are informed of the consequences of breaches of rules and guidelines, and reasons for decisions.
- Specific processes are available and clearly explained for appeals of decisions and resolution of conflicts.

THE CARDINAL RULES

The TC Model contains cardinal rules which, if breached, nearly always result in dismissal from the program. The Farm adheres to this code of practice.

The rules are:

- No drugs or alcohol
- No weapons, violence, or bullying
- No threats of violence or intimidation
- No lending or borrowing or stealing
- No sexual relationships
- No gambling
- Take action if you have knowledge of any of the above

VISITORS

From time to time The Farm will arrange for visitors to come to the premises. These visits are mainly from family members and form part of the family reunification goal of the program. Residents are notified of these in plenty of time to let family members know. They can be private visits or take the form of a combined event for family members and benefactors to The Farm.

INTERNET AND PHONE RESTRICTIONS

Phone Calls are not permitted during the first six weeks of the program and after that only to immediate family. Those residents with children may contact them once a week or oftener from the beginning of their stay at the discretion of management and if there are no court orders or care plans in place limiting contact.

Unless you are contacting children, you cannot have access to internet or phone during the first six weeks of your stay.

After this orientation period, you may access the phone on Wednesdays and Saturdays (subject to the approval of the case manager) and internet (whitelisted) to do your studies and morning meeting preparation at specified times. Clients are not allowed to use private email or any social media at all during the program. Access to email can be had during supervised sessions with the case manager and the tutor.

NO SMOKING

There is no smoking at the Farm. Research shows that if you also quit smoking while you are in rehabilitation, it can improve your chances of recovery and sustained sobriety. You would also be surprised at how much money you can save!

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

The Farm has a zero- tolerance policy regarding alcohol and illegal drugs. Prescription only drugs must be prescribed by a qualified medical practitioner and taken as prescribed, and, if not, will be treated as illegal drugs and prohibited. This prescribed medication is taken under supervision. If any person is found breaching these rules the manager will be contacted immediately and the resident will be discharged.

TRANSPORT

Arrangements should also have been made to book transport. Routes will be discussed during your phone interview.

OPENING HOURS

Opening hours are between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

DISABILITY ACCESS

The Farm buildings can be accessed via ramps to cater for those with mobility problems.