



Next Steps Outpatient Program

Participant Handbook



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1: Overview of the Butterfly Next Steps Outpatient Program

Butterfly Foundation is committed to providing high quality evidence-based treatment and support to anyone who is affected by eating disorders and body image concerns, and those who care for them. The Butterfly Next Steps Outpatient Program will deliver an online intensive outpatient program, for anyone aged 16 years and over, which will incorporate group therapy, skills training, supportive meal therapy, and lived experience-led recovery support. This 8-week program will be delivered virtually via Zoom, providing intervention for people stepping down into the community from an inpatient or residential admission for treatment of an eating disorder.

Next Steps will be informed by evidence-based treatments for group and individual therapy and will include both psychological and dietetic support. During this 8-week program, you will participate in group therapy, supported meals, and will receive individual support from a psychologist and dietitian. There is no requirement for you to be weighed by program staff. Taking weight as part of a medical assessment will be completed by your physician or the team in charge of your medical monitoring in line with the frequency determined by your medical review team.

The involvement of family, carers, significant others, and support people is important in the treatment of people with eating disorders. Next Steps supports you and your loved ones through education and the introduction of skills to assist in recovery. Your nominated support people will be invited to join one of Butterfly's Collaborate Care Skills Workshops. The workshops are evidence-based carer interventions that have been shown to reduce psychological distress, burden, expressed emotion, and emotional over-involvement in carers of people experiencing an eating disorder. More information about this program can be found [here](#).

Aims of the Next Steps Outpatient Program

This unique and specialised program provides you with support and encouragement while transitioning back into community treatment following a residential or inpatient stay for an eating disorder. The program aims to be a stepping stone between these two treatment service types and provide you with the skills you need to continue your recovery journey.

The Butterfly Next Steps Program aims to provide and develop skills to:

- Address the various symptoms of an eating disorder (e.g., purging, bingeing)
- Normalise food intake and eating behaviours
- Reduce psychological and physical contributors or consequences of the eating disorder
- Provide a step down from residential/inpatient treatment

With the support of a strong clinical team, Butterfly's Next Steps Outpatient Program works to enhance your ability to deal with your eating disorder by:

- Assisting to identify underlying psychological issues that may be interfering with recovery

- Educating and guiding family members and significant others
- Improving social and relationship dynamics
- Establishing relapse prevention skills

The Next Steps Outpatient Program supports you in an open and non-judgmental way, placing significant emphasis on forming respectful and trusting therapeutic relationships.

Program Outline

The program will run for a minimum of three hours a day, three days per week, for 8 weeks with the option to extend your time in the program up to a total of 12 weeks. All sessions will run on Zoom. Group sessions will run from 3:30-7:30pm AEDT/AEST (Mondays and Tuesdays) and 4:30-7:30pm AEDT/AEST (Wednesdays). Dietitians, psychologists, and peer support workers will facilitate the sessions. All staff will assist with meal support.

Additionally, you will receive three weekly individual sessions, one with a dietitian, one with a psychologist and one with a peer worker. These will be scheduled between 12:30-2:30pm AEDT/AEST, with sessions available Monday to Thursday. You will see the same psychologist, dietitian, peer worker and nurse for the duration of the program.

Group sessions will focus on addressing various aspects of eating disorders and disordered eating, including body image concerns, emotion regulation difficulties, relationship difficulties and the normalisation of eating behaviour, allowing you to explore your struggles in a safe, supportive, and recovery-focused environment.

Program Conclusion

It is the aim of the Next Steps Program to develop your ability to maintain your recovery after completing the program. You will be supported to develop a relapse prevention plan to maintain the changes you've made on the program. A treatment summary, prepared by Next Steps staff, will also be provided to any external treatment providers.

Early exit from the Next Steps Program

If you opt to leave the program, Next Steps staff will first discuss this with you, and then communicate with your external treating team to ensure a comprehensive follow-up.

You may need to leave the program if you become medically unstable and are admitted to hospital (medical or eating disorder unit). You are welcome to reapply in the future but it will require reassessment of your suitability for the program and updated medical clearance from your treating psychiatrist or GP.

2: Treatment Non-Negotiables & Flagging system

Treatment non-negotiables are an essential part of the Butterfly Next Steps Outpatient Program for the following reasons:

- To ensure the safety of group members and staff
- To ensure all members clearly understand from the outset what to expect during the program
- To provide consistency and certainty during treatment
- To provide a safe, respectful, and caring environment that promotes change and self-awareness around thoughts, feelings, and behaviours

You are expected to engage in all treatment non-negotiables (below) throughout the program. If you are struggling to meet the non-negotiables, you will receive support from a member of the treatment team to discuss any barriers and your ongoing commitment to the Next Steps Program.

Non-Negotiables

Provide evidence of medical stability

Being a virtual program, Next Steps relies on medical professionals and community-based medical teams to provide assurance around your medical stability. As such, medical clearance forms from your treating GP or psychiatrist are required to be eligible and to remain engaged on the program. Next Steps relies on the expertise of the treating physician to discuss and establish the frequency of medical monitoring. At a minimum, these are required at referral and prior to commencing the program (if there is more than a fortnight between the two time points).

You are asked to book medical appointments in advance so that there is enough time for Medical Clearance forms to be submitted to the program. Next Steps staff may request you attend your GP for more frequent medical monitoring if there is indication that you are deteriorating or new information raising concerns about eating disorder behaviours are identified during the course of the program. If medical clearance documentation is not provided by the required date, you will not be able to attend groups but will be offered an opportunity to problem solve challenges related to being able to provide the required documentation.

The Next Steps Outpatient Program nurse will review all medical clearance forms and will liaise with the nominated medical professional if any abnormalities in medical stability arise.

Absences and tardiness

Attendance to groups and all individual sessions is compulsory for the duration of the program. If you need to miss a particular group or individual session, arrive late, or leave early for any reason, staff should be advised with as much notice as possible. Any more than 2 absences from sessions is likely to decrease the efficacy of the treatment. Participants who are absent from group sessions without

prior approval, who are excessively late to group sessions or who leave the program early without prior discussion and approval will be invited to a meeting to discuss barriers to attendance and problem solve around this. If you are absent from sessions without informing the facilitator, your Risk Contingency Plan may be triggered, and your support person called.

☐ Be monitored by the same medical professional for the duration of the program

Continuity of care and ensuring that there is a medical professional in the primary health care setting to monitor and coordinate your care is crucial during the program.

At intake, Next Steps staff will ensure that you have a nominated medical professional who you can work with for the duration of the program. In order to ensure that you are able to be seen in a timely manner, you will be asked to book medical appointments in advance so that you can see your preferred GP, or Psychiatrist. On the Medical Clearance Forms, the treating medical professional will be asked to acknowledge their commitment to support and monitor you for the duration of the program. If a change in professional is required during the program due to unexpected reasons, Next Steps staff will support you to engage with a new medical professional and provide the new professional with a written treatment summary.

☐ Engagement and participation

Next Steps Outpatient Program is an inclusive program that seeks to provide a safe and non-judgemental space for all participants. It is important that you understand that information shared with other group members is strictly confidential and is not to be discussed with anyone outside of the group. We encourage everyone to contribute, participate, and engage in the group sessions. To help the groups run smoothly and to ensure the safety of all group members and staff we ask that you please follow the below rules:

- Access the group from a confidential space that is free of interruptions
- Keep the camera on at all times. If this needs to be turned off briefly for any reason, let the staff know by chat function prior to turning the camera off
- Use recovery-oriented language at all times and avoid using triggering language. E.g., avoid appearance-based comments and do not comment on someone else's food, weight, or shape; do not use specific numbers/quantities around weight, food, exercise, substance use etc
- Only share details of recovery-oriented content or behaviours. Avoid all "pro-ED" content including tips related to dieting, purging, specifics around self-harm or exercise, non-recovery websites, social media pages etc

- Be prosocial and engage with others in a respectful and curious manner. Avoid anti-social behaviours such as taking phone calls, walking away from your screen without notifying staff in the chat function, falling asleep during group sessions etc
- Be entirely present and engaged throughout the duration of the group. Avoid taking phone calls or scrolling on your phone/laptop during the program. If you need to take a call during a group due to exceptional circumstances, discuss with the program staff early on during the session check-in
- Dress appropriately for group sessions and avoid wearing cropped tops/swimwear/hoodies covering your head/face
- Be aware and mindful of ED behaviours that can come up during group sessions and avoid engaging in body checking, body measuring, purging, fidgeting, and pacing during the group
- Participate in the group in a sober state. Do not consume alcohol, use other substances, or smoke cigarettes or vapes during group times. If you appear to be intoxicated, you will be asked to leave
- Attempt all take-home tasks and proactively participate in group discussions

☐ Engage in supported meals

Supported meals are an essential part of the program and help to engage you in utilising skills learned on the program and to ensure nutritional intake and adequacy. Adhering to the meal plan discussed with the dietitian, bringing an adequate amount of food and meal completion are all non-negotiables. You are responsible for preparing and bringing your own food in line with your meal plan.

During supported mealtimes you will be required to have your meal and upper body within displayed view.

Flagging System

Upon admission you will start with zero (0) flags. You will receive a flag if any of the above treatment non-negotiables are not met. Flags will be issued by the treating team during weekly MDT meetings and you will be made aware prior to the meeting that you are not meeting the non-negotiables and are at risk of being issued a flag. When a flag is issued, program staff will discuss any barriers you are facing preventing you from meeting the non-negotiables and will problem solve ways for you to meet them for the remainder of the program.

If you reach a maximum of three (3) flags (across any of the non-negotiables), you will not be able to continue the program and must be re-referred if you want to attend again.

3: Participant Privacy & Confidentiality

The Next Steps Outpatient Program upholds a strict confidentiality policy for the safe keeping and appropriate use of all participant material collected on the program. Butterfly Foundation as an organisation is committed to treating all personal information in accordance with Australian privacy law.

The Privacy Policy on the Butterfly Foundation website explains how and why personal information is collected from service users, how this information is secured, managed and used within the Butterfly Foundation, or disclosed to other parties. Please refer to the Butterfly Foundation website for further information: <https://butterfly.org.au/privacy-policy/>

Clinicians working within the Next Steps team have a professional and legal obligation to keep your information confidential with the following exceptions:

- When you give consent for information to be shared with specific people
- When failure to disclose information could place you at serious risk of physical harm or death and disclosure is justified to avoid this risk
- When failure to disclose information could place other members of the community at serious risk of physical harm or death and disclosure is justified to avoid this risk
- When there is a need to consult a colleague or supervisor
- When the person is under the age of 16 years and the information is disclosed for the purposes of notification under child protection legislation
- When information is subpoenaed by a court or otherwise required by law

The Next Steps Outpatient Program team also evaluates the effectiveness of our program on improving outcomes for participants. The information collected for this evaluation process will not include personal details that will identify you, such as by name, address, or date of birth. The data collected will be used for the purpose of program evaluation and subsequent journal publications, research reports, or conference presentations.

Use of Telehealth

The privacy of any form of communication via the internet or a mobile device may be potentially vulnerable and limited by the security of the technology.

You will need to ensure access to a private and comfortable space to complete each session, which will be free from distractions for the duration of the session. Furthermore, you will be required to confirm your location whilst participating in the program at the commencement of the session.

Disruption to Telehealth Sessions

There is the possibility of disruption during a session due to equipment or connection failure. You will be informed of a Risk Contingency Plan (please see below) which will detail the steps that will occur if this happens. This is likely to include your nominated support persons being contacted.

Recording of Therapy Session Materials

Recordings of any Butterfly programs will not be undertaken under any circumstances. We ask you to respect the privacy of the Next Steps Outpatient Program by agreeing not to make recordings of sessions and not to use materials from our sessions for purposes other than therapy.

Communication with External Treating Team

The Butterfly Next Steps team recognise that effective treatment requires a collaborative and coordinated treatment approach and is thus committed to working in close partnership with any external medical staff/clinicians who are providing you with concurrent treatment. This will include collaboration with your GP, psychologist, psychiatrist, dietitian, or other health professionals. Butterfly Next Steps staff will generally contact external clinicians when you have been admitted to the program and at the point you are discharged from the program. It may also be necessary for Next Steps staff to request information from previous treating clinicians at the point of admission to determine your appropriateness for the program.

Communication with Family Members

The Next Steps program also includes the option of carer sessions and endeavours to provide advice and support to your significant others. This includes sharing relevant information with your family members or significant others. This serves to enhance the effectiveness of the therapeutic interventions implemented in the program.

As a minimum, Next Steps requires that you nominate a primary support person to be contacted should any risk issues arise. This support person will be offered the option to join one of Butterfly's one-off carer support sessions. If you are unable to nominate a primary support person, you will be directed to the program staff to make alternative arrangements. Having a support person in an online setting is essential to manage any possible unforeseen factors that may arise and to celebrate and champion you during your recovery journey.

Please also advise the Next Steps program staff if there is someone that you would specifically like to exclude from this process.

4: Participant Safety & Emergency Contact Information

Risk Contingency Plan

During the assessment phase of the program, a member of the Next Steps team will create a Risk Contingency Plan (RCP). The RCP will be utilised in the event of increased distress, emotional dysregulation or loss of internet connection throughout the program. By creating the RCP, you give consent to the program staff to communicate with nominated family members/loved ones, external treating team members and emergency services.

Safety Plan

A safety plan is an individualised plan that details ways of managing distress and risk of harm to self/others. A safety plan may be developed at the assessment phase of the program or you may have a pre-existing safety plan. You will be asked to implement this safety plan in the event of distress or risk issues arising.

Emergencies

In the event of an urgent mental health situation, or if an emergency occurs outside of the Next Steps sessions, your program staff are not available by telephone. Please refer to your safety plan and/or contact:

- Your GP
- Emergency Services (call 000)
- Your local hospital Emergency Department
- Mental Health Line 1800 011 511
- Lifeline 13 11 14