

# avive Health Matters

## Welcome

Welcome to a new year at Avive and what a busy time it's been.

In the wake of Tropical Cyclone Alfred, we want to sincerely thank our incredible Avive Clinic Brisbane team and partners for their professionalism and teamwork. Your dedication to keeping our patients and hospital safe while ensuring continuity of care has only reinforced what we already know – our Avive team is truly exceptional.

By going above and beyond, our clinical, operational and maintenance teams minimised the impact of this weather event and looked after each other in the process. Our emergency plans, processes and systems were put to the test – and they worked. This experience has been a reminder that preparedness matters, and we are prepared for anything.

In other news, our wonderful teams in Brisbane and on the Mornington Peninsula have recently undergone national accreditation. This is a rigorous process, which sees independent, external assessors evaluate every aspect of a hospital's operations.

In undergoing this assessment, Avive commits to maintaining and improving the quality of care we

deliver. Meeting the exacting criteria set by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards demonstrates the excellence we uphold.

Congratulations to our Mornington Peninsula staff for successfully meeting all required criteria. It is testament to your focus on governance, clinical excellence, policy, procedures and – all importantly – patient outcomes.

We look forward to finalising our Brisbane assessment, and thank staff at both hospitals for their investment in this important process and your ongoing commitment to mental health care of the highest calibre.

Which brings us to news of further growth within Avive and the appointment of new team members to support our growth. Tim Carr has joined us as our new chief financial officer, bringing with him a wealth of experience in scaling businesses and managing complex financial operations, and please welcome Luke Kean, our new national technology and relationships manager. Brittany Sims has also been appointed Avive's new national people and culture partner, adding to our new social worker, occupational therapist, psychologist and exercise physiologist who have recently joined Brisbane's allied health team.

We look forward to all your contributions as Avive undergoes its next exciting chapter of growth.

Warmest, Greg, Mark and Matt  
Co-Founders, Avive Health



## What a line-up!

Our people go to extraordinary lengths to ensure unparalleled patient care.

You need only look at members of our leadership teams for proof of that.

A recent meeting at our Brisbane hospital brought together four highly valued members of the Avive team as pictured above – Avive Brisbane general manager Ben Pocock, Mornington quality and risk coordinator Paula Taufu, Avive chief operating officer Sue-ellen Blomfield and Mornington nurse educator/infection control coordinator/quality and risk manager Aena Ghai.

They certainly illustrate the diverse stature of Avive personnel.



**Coming soon**

**Cloud Clinic by Avive – a new telehealth platform for practitioners and patients.**

We're pleased to announce that Cloud Clinic by Avive – a telehealth service designed to provide general psychiatric care; and to make ADHD assessments and treatment more accessible for individuals aged 16 and over – is launching soon.

With a focus on expert-led care and streamlined access, Cloud Clinic by Avive supports both patients and referrers by making it simple and efficient to connect with timely mental health support virtually, anywhere in Australia.

To sign up for latest updates visit [cloudclinic.com.au](http://cloudclinic.com.au) or email [help@cloudclinic.com.au](mailto:help@cloudclinic.com.au).

## **You don't have to do this alone**

*"Connecting with others helped me feel less alone."*

Recovery isn't just about medication and therapy - it's about having a strong support system. Our patient experience surveys show that people thrive when they feel connected and supported.

At Avive, we offer:

- ✔ Group therapy and peer connection in a safe environment
- ✔ Yoga, walking, and movement groups to support both mind and body
- ✔ A space where you are seen, heard, and supported - without judgment.

## **Patient experience survey**



## **Alfred no match for Avive**

There can be few greater tests to any organisation than a cyclone.

Yet Avive Clinic Brisbane has come through this challenging climatic event with flying colours, thanks to our impressive staff and technological investment.

Care and support for our patients was maintained – without disruption – due to the precautions our staff put in place and the digitisation of all medical records.

Our treatment and programs continued; ample food, water and supplies were provided; and ongoing inspections gave welcome reassurance throughout the disaster. In fact, Avive did not cease to accept referrals for inpatient mental health admissions at any time.

To ensure the safety and comfort



of our patients, staff and visitors, Avive installed a temporary generator to guarantee a back-up electricity supply – a safeguard to also help support other medical teams and services in our vicinity.

It's been a mammoth effort behind-the-scenes, but one we can all be proud of.

Thanks to all who have helped ensure Avive could be agile, consistent, and, above all, caring during Tropical Cyclone Alfred.



## Help in a time of crisis

It has been a challenging time in the NSW mental health sector and Avive has been playing its part to support both psychiatrists and patients.

A long-running dispute over pay and conditions has put considerable pressure on both mental health professionals and patients in recent months. And, through it all, Avive Clinic Brisbane and Avive Clinic Mornington Peninsula have supported the continued provision of high-quality mental health care.

We have opened the door to psychiatrists seeking flexible opportunities for permanent, contract or locum contracts, particularly at our Mount Eliza facility on the picturesque Mornington Peninsula.

This has extended to telehealth and in-person consultations, ensuring that geography is no impediment to meaningful work or patient support.

Avive remains committed to helping maintain continuity of care for privately-insured and self-funded patients through inpatient admissions and trauma-informed day programs. So whether you're a patient looking for additional support or a psychiatrist interested in exploring new opportunities within our network, Avive is here to help.

Reach out directly to Avive Co-Founders and Co-CEOs Greg Procter or Mark Sweeney to discuss the possibilities. 📞



Greg Procter



Mark Sweeney

## Patient testimonial



After suffering through a relapse and admitting I needed help to regain sobriety, I was lucky enough to have come across Avive Mornington Peninsula.

Avive offered me everything I needed to get back on track and reclaim a sense of self, purpose and the ability to do life without drinking.

All staff were incredible ... I feel very fortunate to have had such experienced, kind, compassionate, patient, caring and empathetic people to nurture and support me to a better life.

The dual diagnosis program was extremely insightful, and I learnt so much about addiction, my thinking and how to move forward to a brighter future. Thank you Avive! 📞

— Dual diagnosis patient





# Serving those who serve

We depend on Australia's defence personnel to defend our country and freedoms. And when these veterans need support themselves, they can depend on Avive Health.

Avive is highly sensitive to the specific needs of veterans, first responders and emergency services personnel. Our tailored immersive inpatient programs, supportive day patient programs and telehealth services are informed by deep personal experience.

Avive Clinic Brisbane consultant psychiatrist Dr Ben Wakefield is current reserve medical officer in the Australian Army and has a passion for military and veteran mental health. He specialises in Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) mental health admissions and bulk-billed DVA services with a strong focus on providing telehealth services to veterans in regional and remote Australia.

"I have a reasonable understanding of how the military health system works, the demands made on veterans and their families and the unique nature of their mental health needs," Ben said.

## Avive's support for veterans is unique.

"We provide consistency and continuity and the follow-up care that patients and their families need throughout recovery," Ben said. "Our psychiatrists can assist with initial DVA reports but, unlike some other services, we will follow the veteran throughout their treatment, saving them having to retell their experiences to multiple healthcare providers.

"While in our care, veterans have access to programs that allow flexible pathways to address PTSD, addictive disorders and depression and anxiety in individual or group settings.

"Our telehealth services, providing immediate access to outpatient care, are especially important to veterans living in rural and remote Australia. We also welcome referrals for inpatient admissions and DVA reports ranging from initial liability claims and incapacity assessments to permanent impairment assessments."

For regional patients, Avive Clinic Brisbane offers support with travel arrangements, including Uber Health. Dr Wakefield also bulk bills all DVA white and gold card holders.

All Avive programs include comprehensive discharge and after-care planning to ensure ongoing support for those who have given so much for our country. 🌐

Avive Clinic Brisbane management with Griffith University nursing students.



## Onward and upward

Our commitment to continuous improvement now sees Avive accepting undergraduate nursing students for placement – a boon for them and for us.

Avive Clinic Brisbane has hosted nursing students from Griffith University completing their mental health placement since October 2024. And Avive Clinic Mornington Peninsula is now in discussions with two Victorian universities to host their students.

Avive Clinic Brisbane general manager Ben Pocock says it represents a great opportunity for the trainee nurses and existing Avive staff.

"It's been great," he said. "We have been getting a lot of great feedback from the student nurses, who have said it's a valuable place to come to and they have enjoyed their time. Some of the students would like to work here afterwards, so it's a great way for us to recruit future staff as well.

"In future we plan on appointing clinical nurses as mentors for the students. It's an opportunity to develop them professionally and to invest in the next generation of mental health nurses."

Avive Mornington Peninsula clinical nurse educator/infection control/quality and risk coordinator Aena Ghai said university students will benefit greatly from an Avive placement.

"Our clinic offers them a digital experience, distinct from traditional, paper-based hospitals, and we think students will enjoy that," she said. "University students can also provide us with important feedback on how we can continue to improve the care given to patients. Our staff are keen to share their knowledge and to help educate new advocates for mental health care."

And in further news from Brisbane, we now have Emma Brincat compiling education resources for staff and Aena helping us ensure we are compliant with our mandatory reporting requirements. 🌐

## Partnerships ensure quality care

At Avive, we recognise that people needing mental health support come from all walks of life and all sectors of the community. That's why we have a team of partnerships managers active across our footprint.

Last newsletter we introduced you to our Brisbane-based partnerships manager Catherine Fitzsimmons as well as John Knights, who is helping us to build relationships in the healthcare, addiction and recovery communities. Recently we also welcomed Matt Baynes to the partnerships manager role on the Mornington Peninsula.

This dynamic trio are actively raising awareness of the unique Avive model of care and exploring how we can best serve those in need.

Before Christmas, that saw Catherine and our Brisbane staff welcoming two representatives of the national charity Wounded Heroes, which provides crisis support to current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) veterans and their families. Generous donations from Avive staff eager to "give back" at Christmas enabled us to provide a food hamper for one Wounded Heroes member and their family.

"It was incredible to see such passion behind the work that your team accomplishes," said Wounded Heroes Queensland community engagement manager Tom Watson. "We are glad to have another avenue of resources to assist with veterans and current serving ADF members."

Noting that Christmas can be triggering for many Wounded Heroes, Tom was grateful to receive the hamper. "It will no doubt make this Christmas one to remember for our chosen veteran and his family."

Catherine also represented Avive at the Christmas morning tea hosted by Drug ARM, which provides mental health, alcohol and other drug awareness, rehabilitation and management programs.

Engaging directly with those who might benefit from Avive programs is a priority for Matt, a father of four and local AFL boundary umpire who brings a unique perspective to his role.

Avive partnerships manager Catherine Fitzsimmons donates care items to Wounded Heroes in Brisbane.



"I am also the associate nurse unit manager at Avive Clinic Mornington Peninsula, so I can speak with GPs, community members and others from my experience of working at the coalface," Matt says. "I will be engaging with local councils, psychology groups and established health services to help develop the pathways needed to service patients in our community."

And that even includes those frequenting football ovals.

"There are a lot of men and women who play Aussie rules who experience mental health issues and I have reached out to AFL South-East because it's important that players and officials know we exist and what we can offer," Matt said. "I will also be visiting nearby rural communities, where we know there is a large suicide risk."

"With one in four people experiencing poor mental health in their lifetime, it's no longer a taboo subject. As the parent of four young adults, I see the struggles young people face every day – it's a very difficult era to be growing up in. Fortunately, there is much more education and knowledge about mental health and I am proud to work in the lovely environment that is Avive Clinic Mornington Peninsula, which is conducive to recovery."

Stay tuned for more details of the education sessions and workshops our partnerships managers will be hosting as we partner with GPs, healthcare providers, community organisations and non-government organisations to change the face of mental health in Australia. 🌐

# Meet Avive's doctors



## Doctor profile

Dr Craig D'Cunha

MBBS (Hons), M. Psych, FRANZCP

"Recovery is more than treating symptoms - it's about empowering patients through therapy, lifestyle and accountability. Sustainable change happens when treatment is holistic, addressing both mental and physical wellbeing. Avive's approach aligns with this vision, combining medical care with structured support, exercise and community connection. By fostering engagement beyond medication, we create a collaborative environment where patients build the skills and confidence needed to rebuild their lives."

### **Q** Tell us about you.

**A** I have lived and worked in Melbourne throughout my career, completing my training at Peninsula Health and Alfred Health. I am currently the head of addictions at Peninsula Health, where I work extensively in substance use disorders and mental health. Outside of work, I have a three-year-old daughter who keeps me busy, and I'm a passionate follower of the English premier league.

### **Q** What is your patient philosophy?

**A** I strongly believe in a holistic medical approach that considers relationships and lifestyle as core components of recovery. Autonomy in recovery is crucial. Patients should be empowered to take charge of their journey. I also believe in having well-functioning systems that allow doctors to spend more time with patients and less on administrative tasks. Ultimately, patients need comprehensive support to focus on their goals and long-term recovery.

### **Q** What inspired you to work with Avive?

**A** I was impressed with Avive's therapy model and its emphasis on providing well-rounded care. Recovery is not just about medication - it includes exercise, interpersonal connections and structured therapy. Avive offers a pragmatic and flexible approach, which aligns with my professional philosophy. Additionally, the opportunity to work full-time in an environment that values comprehensive care, with the flexibility to work evenings and weekends, was an important factor in my decision.

### **Q** What do you bring to Avive?

**A** I contribute to Avive's great culture, where staff are supportive, empathetic and deeply focused on patient wellbeing. Collaboration is key. I work closely with our nursing, allied health and therapy teams to ensure a comprehensive treatment approach. I also believe in the importance of patient accountability, which plays a crucial role in achieving the best possible outcomes in recovery.

### **Q** What early feedback have you received from patients about their Avive experience?

**A** Patients have shared overwhelmingly positive feedback about their experience at Avive. Many appreciate the well-structured, out-of-therapy support community, and find it engaging. The overall collegiality and welcoming culture at Avive have made patients feel at ease.

From direct patient feedback, we've seen that regular connection and therapeutic engagement beyond medication have been instrumental in patient recovery. Our service is also enhanced by the involvement of a community engagement advocate with lived experience, who runs weekly sessions to help patients integrate with relevant support groups after discharge. This has provided a unique and valuable layer of support that differentiates Avive from other programs. 🌟





## **Rapid access mental health referrals**

When you need help, you shouldn't have to jump through hoops to receive it.

Avive is focused on making mental health treatment easily accessible – to referrers, prospective patients and those inquiring about care for a loved one – from the moment you contact us.

Having one centralised admission line is the key. Our compassionate staff are available to answer key questions and conduct relevant health fund checks during your very first contact. Then we can direct you to an Avive hospital and confirm your psychiatrist, to begin your treatment journey immediately.

Behind-the-scenes, dedicated staff take care of the rest – liaising with doctors aligned with your diagnosis, confirming their availability and ensuring your health fund coverage is appropriate.

In choosing Avive, you connect with a team that streamlines your care, from admission through to discharge. A team that takes the worry out of accessing the care you need, when you need it. Call 1800 284 830 or email [help@avivehealth.com.au](mailto:help@avivehealth.com.au). 📞



Scan QR  
code to email

## **Patient experience survey**



## **Care that puts you first**

*"The staff really listened to me. I felt heard, understood, and safe."*

Our patient experience surveys highlight the importance of being heard and supported throughout your journey. At Avive, we prioritise care that makes a real difference.

Patients have told us:

- ✓ Doctors take the time to get treatment right
- ✓ Nurses check in, listen, and advocate for them
- ✓ Ours is a team that ensures they feel safe, respected, and supported. 📞

## Meet the team



### **Elizabeth Harry**

Nurse unit manager  
Mornington Peninsula

#### **Q Why did you choose to work in the mental health sector?**

**A** I have always been naturally drawn to mental health. I find mental health extremely interesting, particularly the strong links between mind and body. Mental health nursing is extremely rewarding and it's such an exciting time to be a part of mental health care and working with the community. People are embracing a deeper awareness and understanding of the importance of good mental health; it has been normalised and more people are prepared to talk about it.

#### **Q What inspired you to work at Avive?**

**A** The fresh new outlook and holistic approach to mental health care. The culture and facilities at Avive Mornington Peninsula are also incredible and, working here, I am seeing a difference in patient outcomes. That's really inspiring.

#### **Q Tell us a bit about what you do at Avive.**

**A** As the nurse unit manager, I manage both wards at Avive Mornington Peninsula, which is a total of 60 beds. I work alongside a fantastic team, which are among the best nurses I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with. I oversee the day-to-day ins and outs and running of the wards, I manage staff and patient care coordination.

#### **Q What do you love about your role?**

**A** I love that no two days are the same and I have to think on my feet. I spend most of my day problem-solving, which I think is one of my strengths. I never usually get a chance to check the clock. The team and culture at Avive are like nothing I have ever experienced before; it's such a lovely place to work and I look forward to coming in every day.

#### **Q Do you have any hobbies or interests outside of work?**

**A** I have recently reignited my love for surfing and I have been fitting that in on the weekend, around my family and two little children and weather permitting. I also run 3-4 mornings a week before work, which I find really keeps me balanced and in check. I notice a significant positive influence on my productivity the mornings I run; I have energy and that get-up-and-go to take on the day. It's also nice time to myself and an opportunity to practice mindfulness. In the winter, we are an avid skiing family, so you'll find us in the mountains. I got put on skis at the age of two, so it's something of a family tradition. 🧤

## **Patient testimonial**



Cannot speak highly enough of Avive and their amazing staff! I have spent years seeking the right treatment and help and finally feel like I have found it. Thank you all for giving me another shot at life. Dr Vikas, the nurse team leader, Kate and all of the nursing staff are amazing individuals I cannot appreciate more. Thank you again. 🧤

— Avive Clinic Brisbane patient





## Patient experience survey

### Your recovery, your way, with the right support

"I finally feel like I have hope again."

Our patient experience surveys show that people value care that sees them as a whole person - not just a diagnosis.

That's why Avive provides:

- ✓ Movement programs, gym, and yoga for physical and mental wellbeing
- ✓ Mindfulness and embodiment therapies to help you feel grounded
- ✓ Nutritionally balanced meals designed to support recovery
- ✓ Private, peaceful rooms for rest and reflection. 🧘



## Patient testimonial

"I was admitted to Avive Health for chronic alcohol addiction at my absolute rock-bottom, and following several unsuccessful attempts at staying sober over an 8-10 year period.

My experience at Avive was different. It struck a near-perfect balance between delivering the professional treatment I so desperately needed and allowing me the freedom and autonomy to 'live' simultaneously during the early stages of recovery, which I found a far more practical and realistic model of rehabilitation.

I found the dual diagnosis program particularly beneficial and facilitated to the highest standard by kind, empathetic and professional staff.

The location is excellent - away from the hustle and bustle of city life but close enough also to the 'real' world - beach, walking trails and shops, which made taking daily leave particularly pleasurable.

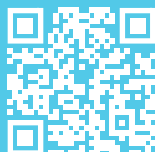
I am now over three months' sober. Avive Health was the catalyst for me to finally take my sobriety seriously and I cannot thank the staff, facility and program enough for their contribution to completely turning my life around." 🧘

— Avive dual diagnosis patient

## Join our Avive team

We are expanding our dedicated team at Avive.

If you are passionate about delivering exceptional mental health care, consider our latest career opportunities at [avivehealth.com.au/careers](https://avivehealth.com.au/careers)



At Avive Health, you'll flourish in positive and supportive environments within teams of lifelong learners who are experts in their fields. You'll also make a meaningful impact on people's lives every day. 🧘



# The right treatment starts with understanding

"My doctor found the right diagnosis and treatment for me. I finally feel like I'm on the right path."

One of the biggest takeaways from our patient experience surveys is the impact of personalised care - treatment that's based on truly understanding each person's needs.

At Avive, we go beyond surface-level care to:

- ✔ Listen, not rush - your experience matters
- ✔ Provide a personalised approach to mental health treatment
- ✔ Offer ongoing support so you feel confident moving forward. 🧠

## Patient experience survey



## Welcome consumer advocates

Consumer and carer representatives are an increasingly important conduit between Avive's care teams and patients.

Their lived experience as patients or carers affords them valuable insights and understanding.

At Avive, we are growing our team of consumer advocates to help us continually improve the patient experience. They are actively advocating for patients, offering peer support and having important input into service design and delivery at both Avive Clinic Brisbane and Avive Clinic Mornington Peninsula.

"Our staff in these roles are helping to enhance clinical outcomes by ensuring that patient voices are heard and respected," said Avive's co-CEO and co-founder Mark Sweeney. "This informs mental health care that is empathetic, practical and tailored to the actual needs of individuals facing mental health challenges."

As well as giving informal encouragement to patients, Avive's consumer and carer representatives represent them more formally on our consumer and carer committee, where they contribute to the design and

evaluation of our processes, programs and services. They share with senior management feedback provided by patients during surveys and community meetings and also relay information from senior management back to patients.

"There's a power in identifying as someone who has experienced a mental health condition," said John Knights, Avive's national strategy and lived experience manager. "We provide opportunities for patients to be more open and vulnerable. It provides a foundation for trusted communication and helps patients to feel supported and hopeful. This is already feeding back into improvements within Avive Clinic Mornington Peninsula and we now have two new consumer and carer representatives assisting patients at Avive Brisbane." 🧠



Avive national strategy and lived experience manager, John Knights.

## Meet the team



### **Kate Dwyer**

Nurse unit manager  
Brisbane

#### **Q Why did you choose to work in the mental health sector?**

**A** I have been working primarily within the mental health sector for 15 years. I have always been fascinated by the brain and what motivates us to think and act the way we do. I also believe that everyone has a fundamental right to mental health care. I feel incredibly privileged to work with patients each day and help them throughout their journey and recovery.

#### **Q What inspired you to work at Avive?**

**A** I felt that Avive wanted to genuinely create something unique within the private mental health sector. I was drawn to the fact that Avive Clinic Brisbane was a standalone hospital focusing on holistic mental health care with an emphasis on patient-centred care and trauma-informed care. The incorporation of technology into our everyday nursing practice has significantly impacted our ability to streamline nursing care and enhance the delivery of patient care and positive outcomes.

#### **Q Tell us a bit about what you do at Avive.**

**A** I am responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the clinical unit, whilst supporting the nursing team who ensure the highest quality of patient care delivery. I am very grateful to manage such a hard-working team of nursing staff who make a significant contribution to the overall functioning of the hospital.

#### **Q What do you love about your role?**

**A** I love managing a team and I feel very privileged to be part of the Avive team. I feel it is rare to have such a positive culture and strong team within a hospital setting. Despite the management component of my position, I still feel invested in working closely the patients and assisting them throughout their admission and recovery.

#### **Q Do you have any hobbies or interests outside of work?**

**A** I keep busy looking after my young family and studying for my postgraduate degree. I like to keep active and spend time with my family and friends. 🧘

## **Patient testimonial**



I received a really different kind of care at Avive. I felt supported, very safe and not judged for what has been a long-term mental health and substance abuse battle.

The team at Avive really listened and the content of the daily program was very helpful. The focus that Avive has on incorporating exercise into its health plan really helped me and I have continued with exercise now that I am home.

I feel hope from my time at Avive. My life has improved considerably since I left. I also know that I can go back as part of my after-care journey if I need further support. I was treated with respect and kindness at all times which helped me to see myself in a different light. 🧘

— Avive Clinic Mornington Peninsula patient







## ***Aena has all the moves***

There was a time when Aena Ghai would not have contemplated working more than 15 minutes' drive from her home, wherever she lived. That was until she heard about Avive and its vision for a new brand of mental health care on the Mornington Peninsula.

Fast-forward to today and our dynamic nurse educator/infection control coordinator/quality and risk manager travels up to an hour one-way from south-east Melbourne to fulfill her duties at Mornington Peninsula.

"What I do at Avive makes all the travel worthwhile because it gives me great satisfaction," said Aena, a much-loved member of our team since the Mornington Peninsula hospital opened in December 2023. "Avive has given me the opportunity to demonstrate the kind of mental health clinician I am; the chance to research, educate, collaborate and continue to adapt and improve as we reimagine mental health care."

This freedom and inclusivity have also enabled Aena to demonstrate two of her personal passions – Bollywood dancing and cooking Indian cuisine. A dance lesson she gave during mental health week



last year saw staff and patients discover new moves and Avive Mornington Peninsula's orientation was spiced up by Aena's tasty traditional recipes.

"We held a cultural food day, and I cooked for about 30 staff, and they all loved it," she said. "It was great fun. Now staff would like to have a multicultural food day and other events celebrated at Avive every year.

"At Avive, we can think differently to provide the best care to our patients because there is no legacy of bad practices. We can create new things in providing high-quality care."

It was certainly a new beginning for 18-year-old Aena when she came to Australia from India in 2006. She completed her Bachelor of Nursing Studies at the Australian Catholic University in 2008 and worked in hospitals across Sydney, achieving a dream she had harboured since the age of 10. In 2014, when Aena moved to Melbourne, she started working in the mental health unit of a private hospital.

Aena's portfolio at Avive Mornington Peninsula is extensive – encompassing staff education, providing expert clinical advice to consumers and healthcare professionals about infection control, and helping to implement a comprehensive quality framework that incorporates corporate and clinical quality, risk and policy.

"I follow a systematic, risk-based approach to manage what I do at Avive in collaboration with our multidisciplinary team," Aena said. "The role has meant enjoying crazy, inspired, fun-filled experiences that feed my soul and fuel my creative thinking.

"I feel well supported and love the teamwork. The role has given me insights into my potential and the opportunity to take on new challenges, which has made me more confident. It's a blessing to see Avive grow and to feel part of this big family."

Maintaining her own self-care is critical to Aena juggling her three significant areas of professional responsibility. "I cherish time with my kids and family, which helps with my own mental health," she said. "I make sure I pursue my hobbies and enjoy travelling, photography, Bollywood dancing, singing and music. I have a morning meditation and yoga routine, which I learnt from my dad. My mum is a mentor and a great friend, whom I call every day.

"I love teaching Bollywood moves to my girls Amya and Myra, who are 10 and 6, for performances at school and community events. In addition to Avive staff and patients, I also enjoy teaching friends and their kids because dance promotes healthy living and gives you a full body workout."

Every Sunday, Aena and her family also attend prayer meetings. "This has helped me to identify what is meaningful to my life. It is how I can find hope and comfort in even the hardest of times. For me, a spiritual connection includes having a sense of gratitude, compassion, empathy and happiness towards people, nature and the world. Having more self-awareness about who you are helps you to tap into your soul's wisdom.

"Integrating joy, hope and optimism within teams is a modern version of self-care; this is how you can create a work environment where joy is shared and everyone feels motivated to contribute their best." 🌀



## ***Avive Mornington Peninsula receives high praise during accreditation***

In exciting news, our dedicated team at Avive Clinic Mornington Peninsula has successfully completed national accreditation – a rigorous process led by independent assessors who evaluate every aspect of how a hospital runs.

This assessment, set by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards, ensures services like ours meet high benchmarks for quality, safety, governance, and clinical care. We're proud to say that Avive Clinic Mornington Peninsula met all required criteria, reflecting our team's commitment to excellence and to the people we care for.

And the feedback from surveyors truly spoke to the heart of what we do.

The accreditation team described our leadership team as "outstanding", recognising the care, clarity, and direction shown across our hospital and services.

One of the most moving pieces of feedback was about our consumer carer program, where people with lived recovery experience walk alongside our patients. The surveyors said this level of involvement was "exceptional and not something they've seen before". They highlighted how our consumers engage with patients week after week, and how meaningful those connections are.

We're incredibly proud of this result. It reflects our values in action: quality care, strong systems, and human connection at the centre of everything we do. 🌀

## Meet the team



### **Jessica Te Hiko**

Allied health care team  
Mornington Peninsula

#### **Q Why did you choose to work in the mental health sector?**

**A** My passion for mental health stems from a deep belief in the transformative power of healing and personal growth. Mental health influences every aspect of our lives, and I wanted to be part of a field where I could help others overcome obstacles and unlock their full potential. Being able to support others through their mental health journey and see the tangible improvements in their lives is incredibly rewarding and motivates my work in this field.

#### **Q What inspired you to work at Avive?**

**A** I was drawn to Avive because of its holistic approach to mental health care. I am particularly passionate about integrative healing methods, and Avive's commitment to blending traditional and alternative therapies resonates deeply with my values. The opportunity to be part of a forward-thinking and innovative organisation that takes a comprehensive approach to wellness was something I couldn't pass up.

#### **Q Tell us a bit about what you do at Avive.**

**A** As a member of the allied health care team, I manage the daily coordination of inpatient and day patient programs, as well as overseeing allied health services and staff at

our Mornington Peninsula hospital, ensuring that our clients receive the most holistic and well-rounded care possible. I work closely with a multidisciplinary team to develop individualised treatment plans that combine both traditional and holistic approaches, always with a focus on supporting mental and emotional health.

#### **Q What do you love about your role?**

**A** What I love most about my role is the variety it offers and the chance to work alongside such a dedicated team. Every day presents a new opportunity to learn, grow, and contribute to something truly meaningful. Being part of a process that positively impacts people's lives is incredibly fulfilling.

#### **Q Do you have any hobbies or interests outside of work?**

**A** Outside of work, I have a deep love for art, sport and travel. Whether it's creating or appreciating art, spending time with family and friends, or spending my weekends watching rugby, I'm always seeking new ways to engage with the world. I also consider myself a lifelong learner, and I enjoy reading across a wide range of topics. These hobbies keep me balanced and consistently motivate me in both my personal and professional life. 🌀

## **Patient testimonial**



"Avive treats patients with the respect and dignity that they deserve. The level of care I received is second-to-none. Thank you, Avive, for getting me back on my feet and giving me my life back. I'll be forever grateful." 🌀

— Avive Clinic Mornington Peninsula patient







Avive Clinic Brisbane general manager, Ben Pocock at AMA Queensland medical careers expo (left) and Avive partnerships manager, Catherine Fitzsimmons at Frontline mental health conference.

## Out and about

Avive's engagement with patients, other health professionals and key stakeholders is stepping up a gear.

We were represented at the Australian and New Zealand Mental Health Association's Frontline mental health conference on the Gold Coast in early March.

On 22 March, Avive exhibited at the 2025 AMA Queensland medical careers expo, joining colleges, hospitals, and private providers in showcasing medical career pathways.

Avive is also sponsoring the International Women's Day luncheon organised by Wounded Heroes

Australia and the Allison Bayden-Clay Foundation at the Ipswich Turf Club.

May is shaping up as another busy month, with Avive representation at:

- The RANZCP 2025 Congress on the Gold Coast from 4-8 May;
- The Australian Psychological Society Festival of Psychology on the Gold Coast from 16-18 May; and
- The Digital Health Festival in Melbourne from 13-14 May.

Be sure to drop in and say hello. 📍

## The right environment for your healing

"It didn't feel like a hospital. It felt like a place where I could actually heal."

According to our patient experience surveys feeling safe, comfortable, and respected plays a major role in recovery.

That's why Avive provides:

- ✔ A peaceful, private space to focus on yourself
- ✔ Comfortable rooms designed for rest and recovery
- ✔ Movement, mindfulness, and connection in a welcoming atmosphere. 📍

## Patient experience survey



# Meet the team



## Grace Ike

Exercise physiologist  
Brisbane

### **Q** Why did you choose to work in the mental health sector?

**A** I have always been interested in mental health and have been involved in research within the therapeutic intervention and practice space. I believe in a holistic approach to managing mental health and recovery – one that goes beyond the traditional biomedical model. My goal is to connect with individuals in a way that equips them with the tools they need to recover and improve their wellbeing. I am currently doing my PhD in this area, as there is still much to explore in this field. At Avive, I am able to apply both clinical and practical approaches to see if these methods are truly effective.

### **Q** What inspired you to work at Avive?

**A** What inspired me to work at Avive was the opportunity to be part of an organisation that shares my commitment to holistic and patient-centered care. Avive's approach aligns with my belief that recovery is not just about treatment but about supporting individuals through a comprehensive process that includes emotional, physical, and mental wellbeing. The ability to contribute to Avive's clinical practices, while also continuing my research, was an exciting opportunity to see how theory and practice can intersect and make a tangible difference in people's lives.

### **Q** Tell us a bit about what you do at Avive.

**A** My main role at Avive involves running the embodied emotion and movement program.

I teach patients about the important role movement plays in managing mood and mental health. A key focus is helping individuals understand the connection between the brain and body. I work with patients to explore alternative ways of moving, aiming to calm the nervous system and support their recovery. For some, it's their first introduction to movement as a tool for mental health, and I guide them through how movement can go beyond physical benefits to support emotional and mental wellbeing.

### **Q** What do you love about your role?

**A** I think I have the best job in the world. I get to see the power of something as simple as movement change people's perspective on both physical and mental health – and often on life itself. Many patients have tried traditional therapies like CBT and DBT, and sometimes, introducing movement for the first time brings up things they've never dealt with before. It's really special and powerful to witness this transformation. Being part of that journey and seeing the impact it has on individuals is truly special.

### **Q** Do you have any hobbies or interests outside of work?

**A** I enjoy HYROX competitions, which are high-intensity events that really push me. I also love running and am part of a run club. Outside of that, I'm a big fan of cooking and trying new recipes. Cooking is a great way for me to bring family and friends together. 🍳