



Peer Support Groups

Peer support occurs when people who are living with a long-term illness get together and share stories and experiences, and give each other empathetic, emotional and practical help.

The word 'peer' – which means 'one of equals' – is important. It differentiates this type of support from other rehabilitation services provided by professional health-based organisations. Peers are not health professionals or medical experts.

Surviving a heart event or being diagnosed with a heart condition can be very traumatic for many people and their families. Approximately 70% of people who experience a heart event don't attend cardiac rehabilitation and are never linked to support.

People who have little or no support after a heart attack have a higher risk of being readmitted to hospital and are less likely to make the lifestyle changes needed to keep their hearts healthy.

After a heart attack or surgery, many people need help adjusting to a new way of life that includes watching what they eat, taking daily medications and scheduling regular exercise. The social and emotional support offered by family and friends, many say, is crucial to this adjustment.

Just as vital for recovery is connecting with someone who has been through a similar experience, who can offer hope, coping strategies and reassurance about the future.

Heartbeat Bendigo offers support and friendship through regular meetings, lunches and various social events and activities.

Please check our events calendar, which will be updated for 2018 soon, via the menu options above.

**PEER SUPPORT IS A
NATURAL WAY OF SUPPORTING
OUR PEERS THROUGH DIFFICULT
TIMES BY SHARING EXPERIENCE AND
BEING ABLE TO SAY...**

"I'VE BEEN THERE"