



SOCIAL SPOONS

café meals project

Improving social connectedness within the Better Health Network community

Cafe Guide

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Welcome to Social Spoons. We are **delighted to be working with you** and celebrating your socially inclusive café.

who are we?

Better Health Network (or BHN) is a **not-for-profit organisation** that has been providing primary and allied health care services to the communities across south-eastern Melbourne for nearly 50 years. We were formed by the voluntary amalgamation of Central Bayside Community Health Services (CBCHS), Connect Health & Community and Star Health in 2022.

Our vision is of a healthy and inclusive community. We work across the life span and have a strong focus on disease prevention, early intervention and addressing social and health inequity. We offer a variety of health services to our most disadvantaged community members.

what is Social Spoons?

SOCIAL SPOONS is a café meals project aiming to improve social connectedness within the BHN community, specifically targeted at people living in the City of Port Phillip, and City of Stonnington areas.

SOCIAL SPOONS is based on Social Café Meals Projects running in 8 other places throughout Victoria, one of which has been established for over ten years. In a nutshell, SOCIAL SPOONS offers **socially isolated individuals** in our community an opportunity to access **subsidised café meals** at supportive and welcoming cafés in their local area. The meal subsidy is an incentive to encourage these individuals to dine with others, link them into existing programs (eg. community kitchens, gardens, choirs, art classes, training) and health services in an effort to **promote social cohesion** amongst our broader community.





who can become a Social Spoons member?

SOCIAL SPOONS members are selected based on strict guidelines and an intake procedure at BHN. Members may be eligible if they:

- > are currently working with a BHN care provider and would like to increase their social connectedness, and
- > are not engaged with existing social groups, and
- > are not highly engaged in the local community, and
- > are likely to engage with the project for the full 6 month period, and
- > have, or are eligible for, a Health Care Card, and
- > are interested in food and have the potential to enjoy the café environment

how have Social Spoons cafés been selected?

SOCIAL SPOONS cafes meet the following criteria:

- ✓ Welcoming café environment
- ✓ Communal seating area
- ✓ Disability appropriate (i.e. wheelchair access, wheelchair seating)
- ✓ Public transport access
- ✓ Multiple food options for \$15 or less
- ✓ Foods on display or pictures of foods
- ✓ Healthy options on the menu
- ✓ Friendly, welcoming and interactive staff



how does Social Spoons work?

SOCIAL SPOONS members are eligible to receive **4 subsidised meals per month, with a 5th meal for members fully covered up to \$15. BHN will reimburse the café \$12.50 for each meal.**

Note: Members are encouraged to use their card for healthy food, but may choose to only order a drink on some occasions. There are no out of pocket costs for cafes.

Member pays \$2.50 + BHN pays \$12.50 = Total meal \$15

If total meal is more than \$15 → member pays the extra cost

If total meal is less than \$15 → meal subsidy from BHN is less than \$12.50

Regardless of total meal cost, member pays at least \$2.50

for each of their 4 subsidised meals per month.

Members have been encouraged to choose:

- > Meals under the value of \$15 so that their out of pocket costs remain minimal
- > Nutritious menu items at least once per week

STEP 1: SOCIAL SPOONS members are expected to present their SOCIAL SPOONS card to café staff when ordering their meal.

Note: If you suspect that the card does not belong to the client, you may ask them to present ID

STEP 2: Café staff are to check date on card is valid, stamp the card within the meals grid, and record the member ID# and order details on the attached Recording Sheet.

STEP 3: When the recording sheet is full, café proprietors are to send the completed recording sheets with included invoice to BHN for reimbursement or this will be collected by a BHN Social Spoons staff member on a monthly basis.



role of the café proprietors and staff

The role of the Café proprietors involved in SOCIAL SPOONS is to:

- > Provide a nutritious meal in a comfortable, social and welcoming environment
- > Encourage members to 'eat in' rather than 'take-away'
- > Become familiar with members, and encourage them to dine together and sit at communal tables if possible
- > Encourage healthy meal choices where possible
- > Ensure that members present a valid and up-to-date SOCIAL SPOONS card when ordering their meal
- > Collect required payment from members
- > Keep records of member utilisation using the 'SOCIAL SPOONS recording sheet'
- > Report any concerns to the SOCIAL SPOONS working group at BHN
- > Provide feedback to the SOCIAL SPOONS working group at BHN
- > Contact the SOCIAL SPOONS working group or key worker immediately if any problems arise
- > Adhere to terms and conditions outlined on the next page



Social Spoons cafés: terms and conditions

As a provider for SOCIAL SPOONS you are entitled to:

- > Receive a minimum \$2.50 contribution from the member for a meal. Up to \$12.50 is provided by BHN. The client is responsible for paying the difference for any amount over \$15.00
- > Ask the member to present another form of identification if you suspect that the card does not belong to them. If the client refuses, you may write down the membership number and contact the key worker, whose name is written on the card
- > Refuse the member service if they present a fake or counterfeit card
- > Refuse the member take-away orders unless they pay for these themselves. Their SOCIAL SPOONS membership card only entitles them to a subsidy for dine-in meals
- > Refuse the member a subsidy for any alcohol purchased, this can be paid for with their own money
- > Receive reimbursement for meals from BHN within one week of submitting the recording sheet
- > Be treated with respect and dignity by SOCIAL SPOONS members
- > Participate in the evaluation of SOCIAL SPOONS (a brief interview)
- > Honour a 10% discount for members after completing their Social Spoons membership, when they present their 10% discount card.

WELCOMING
AND
POSITIVE
attitudes

dealing with difficult customers:

Café staff may be required to deal with strong emotions such as anger, frustration and distress in customers, whilst at the same time, provide an effective and friendly service. Complications may arise when staff members are faced with a customer population that can include people with some form of mental illness.

Café proprietors should be reassured that they will have support from BHN staff in the event of any unfortunate incidents. In addition they are encouraged to keep the following in mind:

- > If there is any conflict or problems between the SOCIAL SPOONS member and the café staff/other customers, the staff are encouraged to contact the BHN key worker or SOCIAL SPOONS working group.
- > If any cases of illegal activity occur (eg shoplifting, violence etc), the café staff are encouraged to act on the issue as they usually would. However, the SOCIAL SPOONS working group or key worker should also be contacted regarding any incidents.



BUILDing
SOCIAL
capital



contacting Social Spoons:

If you have any questions about **SOCIAL SPOONS**, please contact **Better Health Network** and ask for the **SOCIAL SPOONS** Program Coordinator:

✉ 22-28 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda 3182

☎ 132 246

✉ socialspoons@bhn.org.au

Also find us online:

socialspoons.org.au

f facebook.com/socialspoons



Participant and key worker meeting at a Social Spoons cafe.

