

# headspace

multicultural centre for health & emotional wellbeing

case study visits



**Headspace**

Multicultural centre for health &  
emotional wellbeing

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NTNU Spring 2014

This booklet gives an overview of the impressions that were collected during the 4 case study visits in Australia. Two outpatient psychiatric facilities, one physical wellness centre and a community based charity gave valuable input to the project in terms of programming and provided a deeper understanding of the functioning of social as well as operational aspects relevant for the design process.

the Victoria clinic



mental health clinic  
outpatient facility



450 m<sup>2</sup>



ages 18+



30-40 patients per day

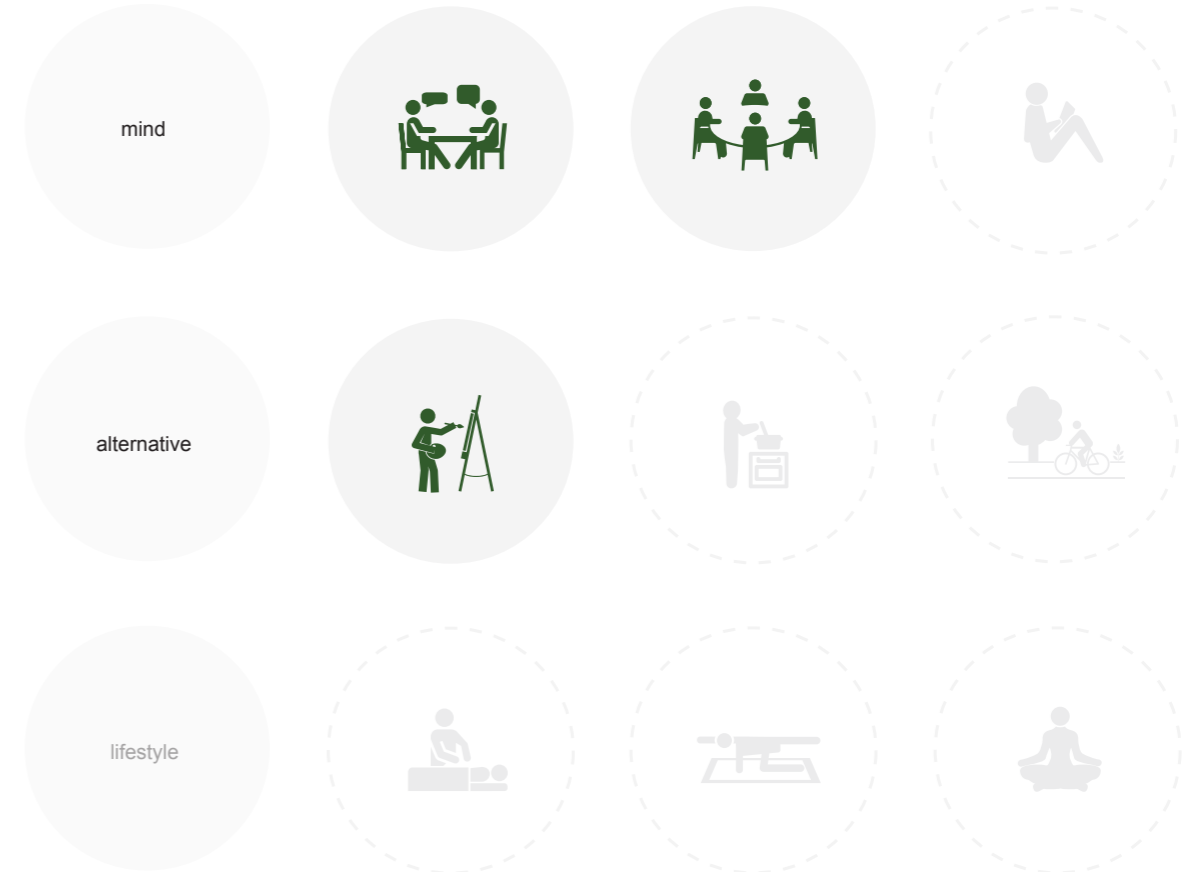
The Victoria Clinic Center for Health and Emotional Well-being is a private clinic in Prahran, Melbourne which specializes in treatment of mental illnesses such as depression, mood and anxiety disorders, chronic psychiatric problems, body image and personality disorders. The clinic's outpatient programs aim to help people improve their psychological and emotional well being through goal oriented group psychotherapy as well as a variety of other therapeutic, recreational and occupational activities. Some groups are diagnosis or age specific and manualised while others are process driven and the group dynamics are the source of change.



**Case visit reflection**

I had been curious to visit this outpatient clinic, as it appeared to offer some of the more interesting programs I had read about previously. A holistic approach seemed to be in focus where different programs follow different treatment methods, relating to mental, physical or spiritual aspects of the human being. Approaching the clinic for my visit I was initially surprised to see that it was housed within what looked very much like a typical Victorian residence, simply with a discrete sign and street number leading the way. The psychiatrist who showed me around later told me that the choice of a residential area had been conscious in a wish to make patients feel more at home and less intimidated upon their visit. The interiors of the building were painted entirely white and I was met by the reception when entering, where I first took a seat while waiting for the person to take me around. The outpatient clinic was quite small, potentially of some 300 square meters and spread across two levels of central corridors surrounded by individual rooms of various sizes. I took note of that the downstairs housed a reception, a couple of consultation rooms, a slightly larger arts therapy studio, a lunch room, and two group rooms, while the upstairs held another two group rooms as well as offices for the psychiatrists and other staff together with a print room. The psychiatrist mentioned that while the facilities were working well, it was sometimes difficult to find a free room when needed and complaints had been heard of the lack of

separate lunchroom for the staff. My personal opinion of the space was that while it seemed functional and respecting the privacy of individual activities, it was not especially inviting and there was no extra space to relax or feel at ease outside the therapy rooms. The localities were obviously centered on providing efficient space for psychiatric services and talk therapies to take place within their time schedules, while little architectural consideration had been given to the development of spaces beyond their strictly practical requirements. After reading about the interesting program offers I had perhaps expected more vitality and diversity than what these individual group rooms could offer. While the visit to the clinic and discussions with the psychiatrist was very useful in terms of gaining a better understanding of how a clinic runs and its practical requirements, it also reminded me of the aspects I am interested in challenging or approach in a different way for my project.



**Treatment offers**



**Functions of interest:**

- 1) Reception
- 2) Interview rooms
- 3) Creative arts studio
- 4) Shared staff facilities

the Melbourne clinic



mental health clinic  
outpatient facility



500 m<sup>2</sup>



ages 18+



30-40 patients per day

The Melbourne Clinic offers day programs as well as inpatient treatment for individuals diagnosed with a range of psychiatric conditions. The day programs at the Melbourne Clinic offer treatment through evidence based group sessions, facilitated by qualified multidisciplinary mental health professionals. Some of their programs include trauma support and recovery, acceptance and commitment, anxiety management, addictive behaviors, young adults program, cognitive behavior therapy for anxiety and depression, eating disorders and healthy body, healthy mind.

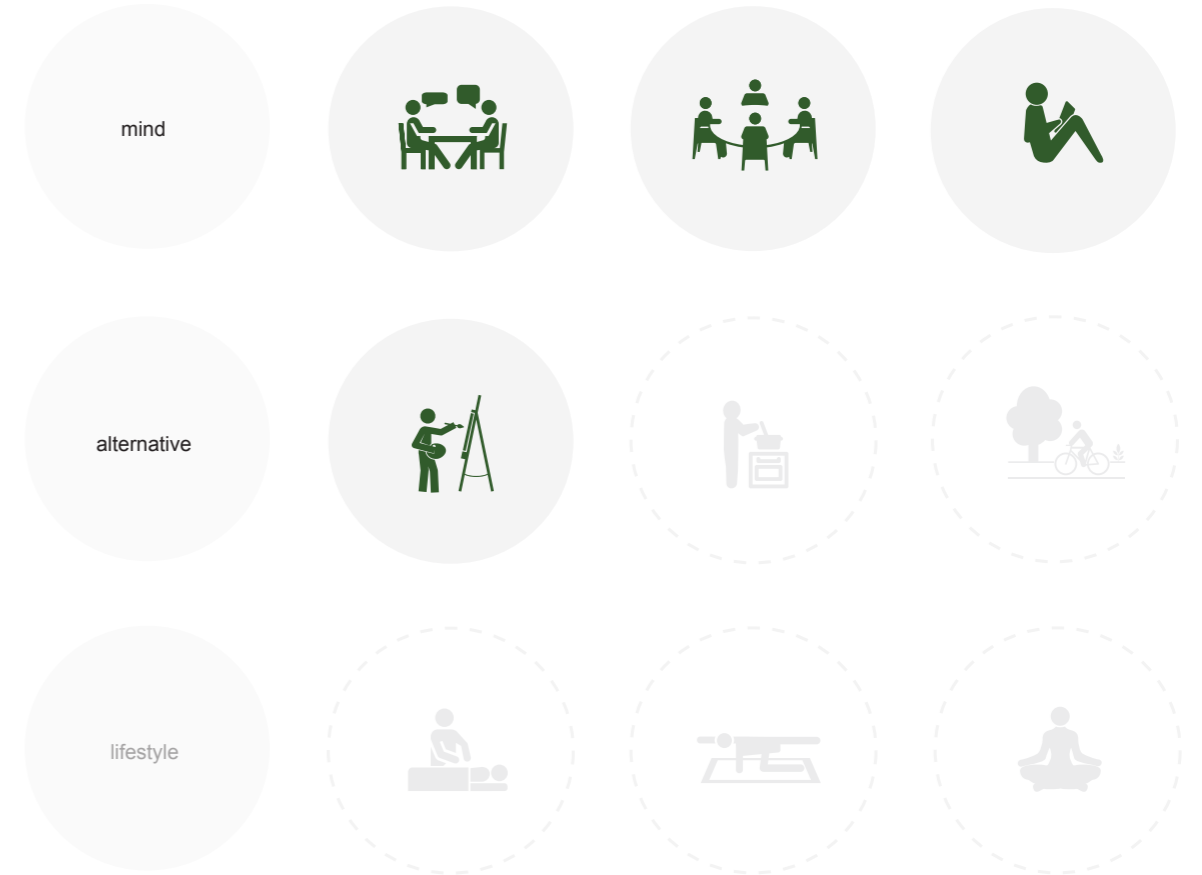


**Case visit reflection**

On my visit to the clinic the first thing I took note of was how anonymous the entry to the outpatient clinic was. It was in fact so hard to locate after being redirected from the inpatient facility that I needed to call for directions. Having found the clinic, my first impression is much the same as that of the Victoria clinic in terms of layout of the facilities and rooms, however, this clinic is slightly more modern and a bit more spacious. The head program coordinator shows me around and informs me of how the clinic operates. The programs function much like the Victoria clinic where patients are grouped based on diagnosis and which type of treatment they follow. An individual may attend one or several programs depending on his or her wishes and needs, and most programs run once a week for about 5 hrs. The plan of the facilities follows a central corridor on both first and second level with altogether 8 group rooms, 3 consultation rooms, several staff offices, 1 larger room for arts therapy or bigger group sessions, an open lunch room, a print room and some toilets. Most of the group rooms

are large enough to fit discussions in a circle among 12-15 people while some rooms are larger and include TVs. The program coordinator tells me that about 50% of the patients at the clinic have arrived from previous inpatient treatment while the other 50% consist of people who only attend outpatient treatment. As the Melbourne Clinic is a private clinic it accepts patients from all around Melbourne, as long as they are able to pay for their treatment that is.

My overall impression of the presentation of this clinic is that is firstly functional, and with no wasted space, much like the Victoria clinic, while the interiors, and especially reception area, are quite inviting and well furnished with modern and bright colors. The least inspiring rooms are quite naturally the group rooms that are there simply to house chairs and maintain privacy, and only some of these have direct daylight. The fact that the entry to the clinic is so hard to notice confirms that this is a place you arrive only upon appointment.



**Treatment offers**





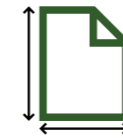
**Functions of interest:**

- 1) Office behind reception
- 2) Creative arts studio
- 3) Large flexible space
- 4) Upstairs interview rooms
- 5) Office for day manager

# Melbourne Natural Wellness



physical wellness center



400 m<sup>2</sup>



all ages



20 customers per day

Located centrally within the Melbourne CBD The Melbourne Natural Wellness Center offers a range of expertise in physical treatment such as massage, musculoskeletal therapy, osteotherapy, chiropractic, acupuncture, reiki, reflexology and more, and also specialize in nutrition, life coaching & counseling. Additionally the center also offers yoga, pilates and meditation classes. The center claims they can tailor make programs of any combination of treatments to suit the needs of individuals, including those suffering from depression and anxiety.



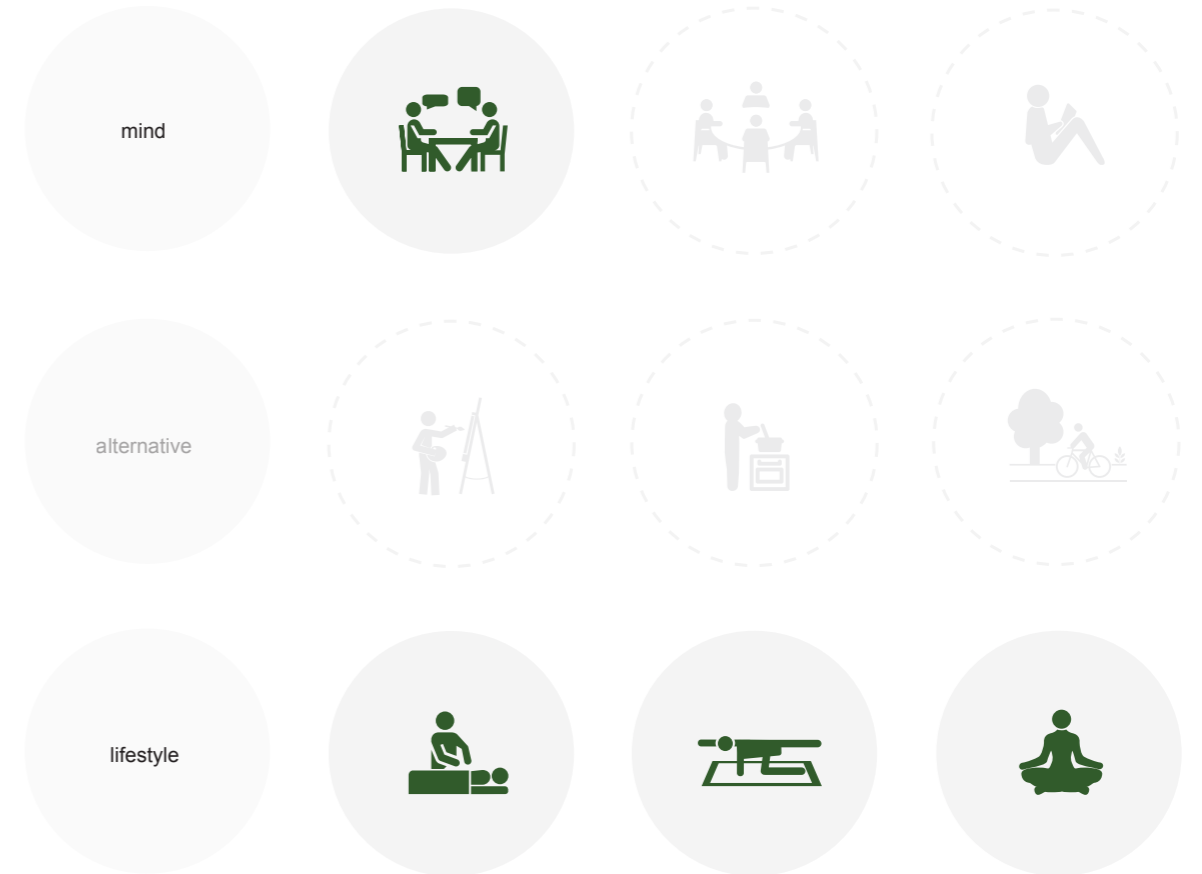
**Case visit reflection**

The center is held on the 4th floor of a building in one of Melbourne’s main shopping streets, and I assume the old yet freshly painted interiors must have held many different uses throughout the years before this one moved in. I am met by a large and friendly reception area which also houses a range of natural health products available for purchase. The atmosphere is soothing as is clearly intended by calming background music and floral scents within the spaces. Walking around the center I immediately find it very inviting and take a liking for the use of earthy colors and timber within each room. It has a certain residential feel, but manages to appear much less clinical than the white painted Victoria clinic, perhaps also much due to the dimmed lighting and friendly furniture in certain areas. The center has 5 individual treatment rooms, male and female toilets and change rooms, a couple of staff facilities and a larger space for physical exercise classes to take place. In total, a maximum of 5 staff work here daily and serve an average of 20 costumers per day.

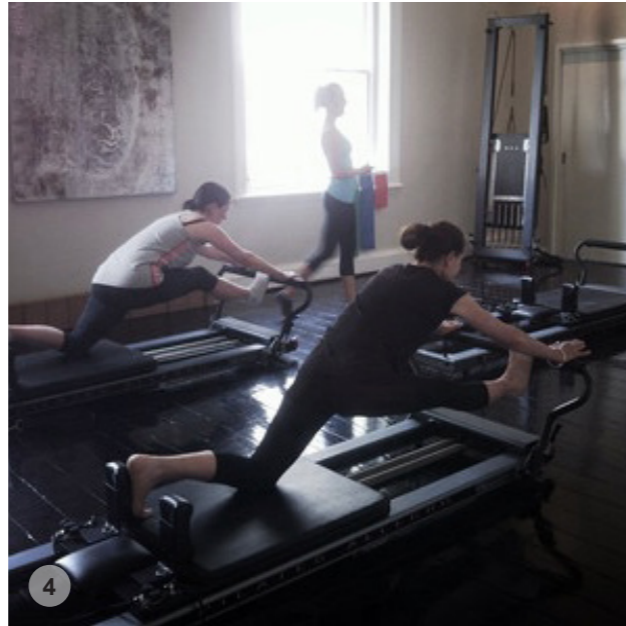
The staffs inform me that they work regularly with patients who suffer from anxiety and depression through a number of treatment types. Almost any of the treatments offered can

help in one way or another, and it depends of the specific needs of the individual. A unique treatment program is therefore set up after a full assessment of the person in question. The staff further underline that negligence of nutrition or the lack of willingness to take care of physical well being is frequently observed among sufferers of depression and that while this suppresses the healing process from depression it is also in some cases observed as a leading cause.

I find it interesting to experience and hear about how this center approaches wellness in a different way to that of a clinic. While professional expertise in psychotherapy is not offered by psychiatrists, which is documented as the most effective way of treating moderate to severe types of depression, the center still offers a very holistic, and from my point of view much less intimidating, approach to treatment of milder types of depression. It is easy to see how someone with depression might benefit well from both typologies. Naturally, physical expertise is something we may all benefit from and so Melbourne Natural Wellness is not focused primarily on those with mental illness, but reaching a wider audience.



**Treatment offers**



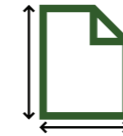
**Functions of interest:**

- 1) Open reception area
- 2) Lounge area for waiting
- 3) Work out & yoga studio
- 4) Treatment rooms
- 5) Internal open air patio

the Prahran mission



community service  
charity



2300 m<sup>2</sup>



ages 18 +



40 group participants  
daily

20 drop-in visitors daily

The Prahran Mission is a not-for-profit community services organisation in Prahran, Melbourne. It is focused on providing a full range of services for people living with mental illness, or in economic or social disadvantage. The day rehabilitation offered by the Prahran Mission consists of several components, including diagnose based programs focused on development of social, living and creative skills, a drop-in center that offers a range of informal activities, as well as an arts studio where artists suffering from mental illness are given a place to practice their art. Additionally, the Mission's Multicultural Access and Support program supports people from diverse cultural backgrounds (CALD) to access appropriate mental health, community and disability support services.



**Case visit reflection**

The entrance to the Prahran Mission's surprisingly large facilities forms a shop front like any other along a street filled with pedestrian activity, shops and cafes. The organisation itself owns both a second hand shop and a cafe, and the entrance to the center is found in the middle of the two. A large staircase and lift leads you to the second floor, which houses the informal drop in center as well as other offices and administrative functions. While the building is old, the interiors have been newly renovated with large glass doors and separation walls. The spaces are colorful, bright, and furnished casually. The informal drop in center has a glazed office area in the center so that staff can keep an eye at what is going on at any time. The areas around offer leisure activities such as pool, tv & computers in a social setting. According to staff, the drop in center sees around 20-30 people come and go daily. It is a place where anyone may stop by at any time, to get social, seek advice, or take advantage of facilities they may not possess on their own. The functionality of this part of the center is very different to that of the two clinics I previously visited where you would only present yourself upon appointment and with a diagnosis.

The Prahran Mission's psycho-social rehabilitation program, named Second Story, runs on the second floor daily and is based around participants meeting with a social worker and working towards living independently in the community. Staff may come from different backgrounds and are not necessarily psychiatrists. To enter these programs patients

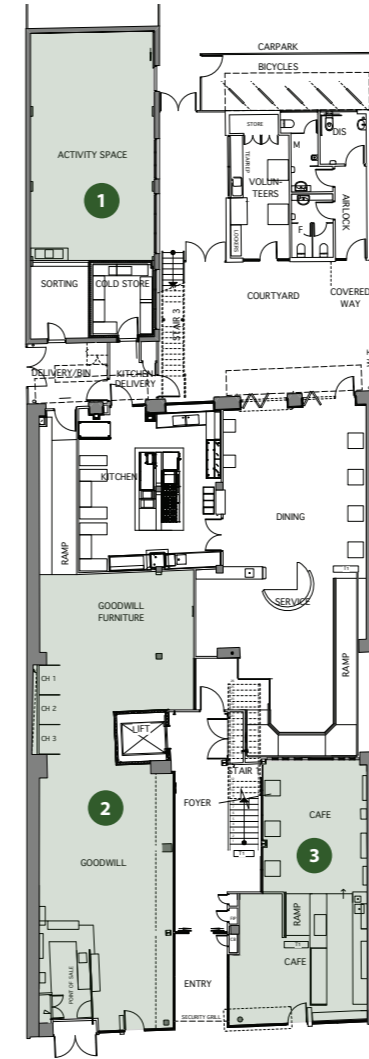
require a diagnosis and they are placed in groups of around 10 that will follow the same treatment. Patients are welcome to join several groups and may attend as many days a week as they like.

The rest of the building houses a range of different functions. A reception for inquiries and emergency relief central is also found on the second floor while multiple office spaces as well as a large cooking facility is found on the third and top floor. The stables art studio is found across the courtyard on the ground floor, where individuals pay 20 dollars a week to rent a personal workspace.

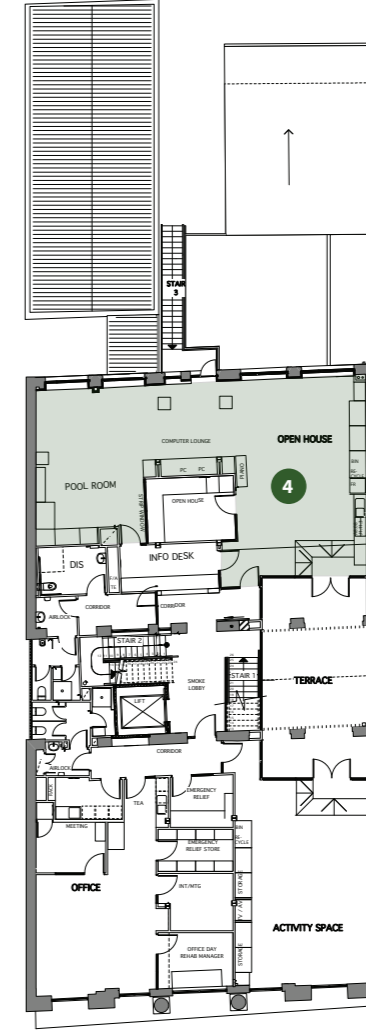
My overall impression of this building is very positive. While nothing is excessive, and the lack of storage was eagerly pointed out by employees, it manages to maintain a personal and less little clinical appearance than might be expected. The charity is evidently successful in creating a home away from home that offers a holistic approach to all necessities of someone who is mentally, socially or economically disadvantaged within society. The contrast between private and more public functions appears more or less seamless and encourages contact to occur between all parts of the organisation, patient or staff, on an equal level. Staff point out that the renovation of the building has resulted in a slight increase in the amount of locked doors as well as the separation of staff facilities from patient rooms. They did however conclude that these measures were necessary for safety and practical reasons.



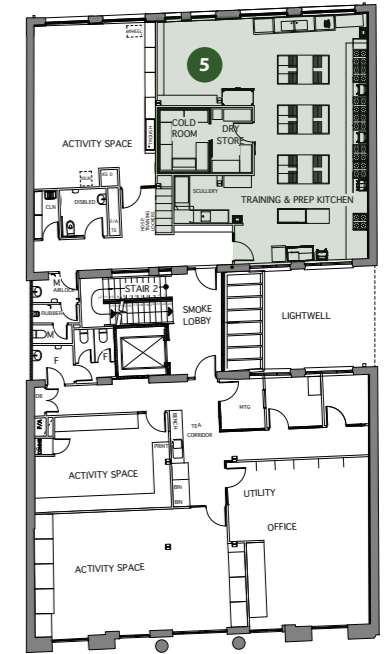
**Treatment offers**



Ground floor



First floor



Second floor

**Functions of interest:**

- 1) Separate arts studio
- 2) Second hand shop
- 3) Street cafe
- 4) Informal drop in centre (open house)
- 5) Training kitchen

## conclusion from visits



The different case studies have left me with a variety of impressions and ideas as for which aspects I may like to implement or improve within my design project. The visits to the psychiatric outpatient facilities helped to generate a view of the functional requirements of the centre, such as the placement of consultation rooms and a friendly reception space close to the main entrance and the inclusion of a larger shared space for arts therapy. These visits also, however, reminded me of what I would like to challenge in terms of approachability. I have been interested in exploring how clinical services like these can co-exist with other functions and spaces that present a more informal facade and my hope is that a center that is more open and approachable in some ways, may still maintain the formality and privacy expected for psychiatric outpatient services in other parts. The visit to Melbourne Natural Wellness convinced me of the effect and importance of a low threshold, soothing and welcoming space for visitors to arrive in. Furthermore, the Prahran mission did perhaps inspire the largest inclusions for my project in terms of programming and operation. The visit to this centre proved my hypothesis that a combination of clinical services and community based occupational therapy can in fact be very successful as long as a balance is maintained between openness and the inevitable demands of sheltering and privacy. The informal drop-in centre, kitchen training facilities and separate arts studio are excellent functions within which patients learn to achieve goals within a mixed atmosphere of people. My wish is to take these ideas further and include them within my own project.



sources



**The Victoria clinic:**

website:

<http://www.thevictoriaclinic.com.au/>

address:

324 Malvern Road  
Pahran VIC 3181  
Australia

contact persons:

Dr Rita Younan  
Clinical Psychologist Inpatient/Outpatient Services

Shana McCormack  
Allied Health Manager

**The Melbourne clinic:**

website:

<http://www.themelbourneclinic.com.au/>

address:

130 Church Street  
Richmond VIC 3121  
Australia

contact persons:

Dr Sarah Valentine  
Clinical Psychologist / Day Program Manager

**Melbourne Natural Wellness:**

website:

<http://www.melbournenaturalwellness.com.au/>

address:

178 Collins Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
Australia

contact persons:

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Wellness Coach and Director

**The Prahran mission:**

website:

[www.prahranmission.org.au](http://www.prahranmission.org.au)

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211 Chapel Street  
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Manager, Day Rehabilitation Programs