

Is this service for me?

What health conditions does this service offer help with?

e-couch provides information and self-help training for depression, general anxiety and social anxiety using strategies drawn from cognitive behavioural and interpersonal therapies, relaxation, and physical activity.

e-couch also includes information and self-help training for separation and divorce, and loss and bereavement.

Who is this service intended for?

Individuals aged 16 years or older who are interested in learning more about common mental health problems and strategies which may help with feelings of depression or anxiety.

The e-couch [Terms of Use](#) require that users are aged 14 years or older, and that users from the USA are aged 18 years or older.

The program is not appropriate for crisis help, and if your symptoms are distressing or limiting, we suggest that you seek advice from a GP, mental health professional, psychologist, or medical specialist.

What kind of assistance does the service offer?

e-couch provides information about emotional problems - what causes them, how to prevent them and how to treat them. It includes exercises to help you understand yourself and others.

e-couch provides training in cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), interpersonal psychotherapy (IPT) and psychoeducation, which are recommended treatments for depression and anxiety disorders in the clinical practice guidelines published by Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists. Digital CBT or Internet-delivered CBT (iCBT) is also recognised in the guidelines.

If your symptoms are distressing or limiting, we suggest that you seek the advice of a GP, mental health professional, psychologist, or medical specialist.

How is this service delivered?

e-couch offers five online training programs: Depression, Anxiety & Worry, Social Anxiety, Divorce & Separation and Loss & Bereavement.

Each program includes a comprehensive information module, as well as self-help modules with interactive exercises and diaries which teach evidence-based strategies.

Are health professionals involved in delivering the service?

e-couch is a self-directed program and therefore health professionals are not directly involved in its delivery to service users. However, the program was developed by mental health experts and clinicians, and its delivery is overseen by experts including health professionals. In addition, clinical enquiries from service users are responded to by a clinical psychologist who will provide crisis support information and recommendations for other services.

When is the service available?

You can access the program at any time by logging in with your email address and password.

How much does the service cost? Is there any ongoing cost?

e-couch is free for use by all Australians and is also accessible internationally on a subscription basis.

How can I access the service?

To access e-couch you will need to register an account. If you have already registered an account, you can log into e-couch with your email address and password.

You will require internet access to access e-couch. The program includes text and pictures, and so you will require sufficient data for this. However, there are no videos, so the data usage for accessing this service is less than for streaming a video for example.

An up-to-date web browser software (a version that is maintained by its vendor) is needed to access e-couch.

Can I access the service anonymously?

You can access e-couch anonymously using an email address of your choice.

Does the service allow my carer, family member or support person to work with me to use the service?

e-couch consists of self-guided online modules, so who you wish to involve in your journey with our service is entirely under your own control.

The [e-hub Health](#) website gives further information about the programs.

Will I benefit if I use this service?

Is there any independent scientific evidence of benefit from using this service?

The information and strategies presented in the e-couch programs are based on the best available scientific evidence.

The programs have also been evaluated by research groups from around the world who have studied their effectiveness with different populations, in high quality randomised controlled trials (RCTs).

More information about this evaluation evidence (including references) is available at the [e-hub Health](#) website.

Is the service endorsed by a government or professional body?

The ongoing delivery of e-couch is funded by the Australian Commonwealth Department of Health.

Could this service do me harm?

Are there any precautions or safety warnings related to this service?

e-couch makes every effort to avoid triggering topics or language that may affect the mental state of a service user whilst using the program.

If your symptoms are distressing or limiting, we suggest that you seek the advice of a GP, mental health professional, psychologist, or medical specialist to check out your mental health status.

Has anyone reported concerns or adverse health events after using this service?

No adverse events have been reported after use of e-couch.

We encourage service users to share any complaints or feedback via email to the [e-couch support team](#), through the feedback form within the e-couch service, or through the [e-hub Health](#) website.

Should I trust this service?

What is the business model for the service provider?

e-couch was originally developed and evaluated over 10 years by researchers at the Australian National University (ANU). The principal authors of the content were Professor Kathy Griffiths, Georgia Tayler and Professor Helen Christensen.

The development and delivery of e-couch is now undertaken by e-hub Health. e-hub Health is an ANU spin-off company managed by the senior members of the original team and is part of the Dialogue Group of Companies. Dialogue and e-hub Health are fully committed to ongoing delivery of e-hub Health's programs to the Australian community.

How does the service make money?

The ongoing delivery of e-couch is funded by the Australian Commonwealth Department of Health. This means that e-couch is free for use by all Australians. Internationally, users can access e-couch on a subscription basis.

Is the service easy to use?

Will I keep using it?

Is there any independent research on how easy it is to use this service?

The e-couch programs have been evaluated in randomised controlled trials (RCTs) conducted by the ANU, collaborating institutions, and independent researchers.

More information about this evaluation evidence (including references) is available at the [e-hub Health](#) website.

e-hub Health welcomes independent research on the use of e-couch with specific population groups or settings. We encourage researchers to contact the [e-couch support team](#) to discuss the requirements of your research.

How much time will it take me to use this service as suggested?

You can access e-couch at any time, and you can complete the modules in any order in your own time. However, we recommend that you complete the information module for each program first before exploring the self-help modules. We then encourage you to revisit the modules which you find most helpful and to continue to add entries to your diaries in the workbook for each program.

When you use e-couch you automatically gain access to all e-couch programs and modules. This means that you can review the information and strategies in any of the programs that you think might be helpful.

How long will it take to get results from using this service?

Within e-couch, each new module explains the purpose of the module and intended outcomes once the module is completed. Within the workbook you can complete symptom quizzes and track your symptom score progress over time.

The length of time before experiencing results varies between service users and depends on a range of factors, including your capacity to implement the strategies which are taught into your everyday life.

Were people with lived experience involved in developing the service?

Yes. Several individuals with lived experience were involved in the development of e-couch. e-hub Health has an allocated lived experience role within the organisation, who herself is a service user and speaks publicly about her journey with depression and anxiety.

What do other users think of this service?

Service users are encouraged to share their experience, level of satisfaction and their outcomes from using e-couch via email to the [e-couch support team](#), through

the feedback form within the e-couch service, or through the [e-hub Health](#) website.

Recently collected feedback data shows that 73% of e-couch users who completed a feedback form reported that e-couch provided them with new skills, 97% agreed that e-couch provided them with useful information and 80% indicated that they enjoyed visiting e-couch.

Will this service link with other health services?

e-couch does not link with other health services. Crisis support and emergency help information is made available throughout the service.

Health professionals may choose to support someone using e-couch alongside other treatments, however clinicians are unable to access service user information or data. More information is available through the [e-hub Health](#) website.

Who will have access to my personal data?

What information does the service collect about me?

In general, the personal information we collect and hold relating to the e-couch program may include:

- age group, gender;
- whether you are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, whether you were referred by a health professional, whether you are in a rural area;
- email address, password nominated by you, answers to secret questions nominated by you;
- the information you submit when using the e-couch program (including quizzes, workbooks and diaries); and
- information about your usage of the e-couch program by using transient cookies, including your browser's internet address; the date and time of your visit to the site; the pages you've accessed; the type of browser you are using; the last viewed date; and the time of your visit; and
- details about your subscription excluding credit card details (if access via subscription purchase).

Who owns that data?

You always maintain ownership over any personal data you share with us.

e-hub Health owns the copyright and other intellectual property rights in the content of the service or has the right to use it in this context.

Who is that information shared with and why?

We may disclose your personal information:

- where we are required to do so by law;
- with your prior written consent;
- where your access to the website has been made available by a research organisation that is conducting a research trial, to this research institution;
- to staff from Dialogue Health Technologies in Canada who are seconded to e-hub Health to assist us in providing our services; and
- to our Service Providers that enable our platform to provide the services to you such as, backup and servers hosting solution providers, data security, data analytics providers and/ or software and IT maintenance providers, service providers who assist with the authentication of individuals and payment processing.

In addition, we may release your personal information (1) in response to a court order, search warrant, subpoena or other legal action, (2) to protect persons or property or to defend or assert legal rights or (3) in connection with a transaction or proceeding resulting in the transfer of e-hub Health assets or an e-hub Health business operation that includes or uses such information.

For international service users who are provided with access to e-couch by their employer, we may disclose information to that employer or other entity that provided access, but only in the form of aggregated reports for user analysis (which include no identifying information).

Where is information about me stored?

e-couch is hosted on servers located within Australia, and data, including any personal information, is stored on these servers located in Australia. The servers are provided by an Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) provider, and the servers and program software are managed by e-hub Health and Dialogue Health Technologies, e-hub Health's parent company who have

a corporate headquarter in Canada. Dialogue Health Technologies assists us in providing our services.

Why does the service ask if I am of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin?

This information is collected so that e-hub Health can monitor trends in access and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander users of the e-couch service, and to inform improvement strategies for culturally safe digital mental health care.

Can I easily share my information and results if I want to?

You can print out copies of symptom surveys and responses to exercises and workbooks to discuss with your support people, family members or health professionals.

Can I save the personal information I enter on my device without it being shared with the provider?

e-couch allows you to enter and store personal information on a voluntary basis. The e-couch website is designed to allow access only to the person who entered the information using Login Access as described in the [Terms of Use](#).

Can I review and/or delete data that has been collected about me?

Subject to the exceptions set out in the Australian Privacy Act, you may seek access to, correction of and deletion of the personal information which we hold about you by contacting us at privacy@ehubhealth.com. We will require you to verify your identity and to specify what information you require. If a fee is charged for providing access, you will be advised of the likely cost in advance.

Does the service have a data-sharing (privacy) policy?

Please see our [Privacy Statement](#) for detailed information.

What security measures are in place to protect my personal information?

e-hub Health takes the storage of data very seriously. Any information collected from service users is stored in a secure and professionally managed environment, and we take active steps to ensure the ongoing security of that data.

For full information about privacy and security, please read the e-couch [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Statement](#).

Who can I contact with questions or concerns about this service?

How can I contact the service provider?

For service user support and further information about the e-couch program, please email the e-couch support team at ecouch@ehubhealth.com.

For concerns about service user privacy please email us at privacy@ehubhealth.com.

Where can I go if I have concerns about this service?

- For privacy/security issues contact the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) www.oaic.gov.au/privacy/privacy-complaints/
- For complaints against a health service contact your state or territory health complaints organisation
www.ahpra.gov.au/notifications/further-information/health-complaints-organisations.aspx
- For complaints against an individual registered health professional contact the Australian Health Practitioners Regulatory Authority (AHPRA)
www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications/Raise-a-concern.aspx
- For complaints about misleading claims contact Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)
www.accc.gov.au/consumers/complaints-problems/make-a-consumer-complaint

Last updated: December 2024