

PROGRAMS UPDATE - DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND AGEING (DOHA)

Mental Health Services in Rural and Remote Areas program

The Mental Health Services in Rural and Remote Areas program (\$72.3 million over five years) provides allied and nursing mental health services, including those provided by social workers, psychologists, mental health nurses, occupational therapists, Aboriginal health workers, and Aboriginal mental health workers in rural and remote communities throughout Australia. This includes \$20.6 million specifically earmarked for drought-affected communities throughout Australia.

This program complements the Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and General Practitioners through the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) program by increasing access to mental health services in rural and remote areas where access to the MBS is low. The program builds on the Access to Allied Psychological Services component of the Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care program and the More Allied Health Services program.

The program consists of two stages. Under stage one, funding has been provided for identified geographical areas-of-need through 15 selected support organisations that have capacity to deliver mental health services. Support organisations include Divisions of General Practice, Aboriginal Medical Services and the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Stage two will build on stage one and enhance service capacity in rural and remote areas of high need including areas affected by the drought.

Mental Health Support for Drought Affected Communities

The Mental Health Support for Drought Affected Communities Initiative is providing \$10.9 million over two years (2007-2009) to build the capacity of rural and remote drought affected communities to respond to the psychological impact of drought.

The majority of this funding is allocated to 45 eligible rural and remote Divisions of General Practice to provide community outreach and crisis counselling. Community awareness activities and education and training for health workers and community leaders will also be provided in eligible Divisions.

The eligible NSW Divisions of General Practice are as follows:

- Barrier DGP
- Barwon DGP
- Dubbo/Plains DGP
- Hunter Rural DGP
- Murrumbidgee DGP
- New England DGP
- North West Slopes (NSW) DGP
- Northern Rivers General Practice Network
- NSW Central West DGP
- NSW Outback DGP
- Riverina DGP
- Shoalhaven DGP
- South East NSW DGP
- Southern Highlands DGP

Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and GPs

The Better Access to psychiatrists, psychologists and general practitioners through the MBS initiative provides better access to mental health care by GPs, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and other appropriately trained allied mental health professionals.

Children and young people

The Australian Government recognises that children and young people are at particular risk of developing mental health problems and supports a range of initiatives to assist them.

headspace: National Youth Mental Health Foundation - improving awareness and delivery of mental health services to young people. www.headspace.org.au

Kids Help Line - a free 24 hour national telephone and online counselling service for children and young people aged 5 to 18. www.kidshelp.com.au

MindMatters - supporting Australian secondary schools in promoting and protecting the social and emotional wellbeing of members of school communities. www.primarymentalhealth.com.au

KidsMatter - an Australian primary school mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention initiative. www.apapdc.edu.au/kidsmatter

Ybblue - encouraging young people and their family and friends to talk about depression, and to get help when it's needed. www2.youthbeyondblue.com

COPMI - promoting better mental health outcomes for children of parents with a mental illness. www.aicafmha.net.au/copmi

Autism spectrum disorders - a report and brochure for parents and carers on the most effective models of early intervention for children with autism spectrum disorders. www.health.gov.au

Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program

The \$191.6 million Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program provides non-MBS incentive payments to community based general practices, private psychiatrist services and other appropriate organisations (such as Divisions of General Practice) who engage mental health nurses to assist in the provision of coordinated clinical care for people with severe mental disorders. Payments under this initiative will be made by Medicare Australia. The application form is available via the Medicare Australia website:

www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/provider/incentives/index.shtml

Program of Assistance for the Survivors of Torture and Trauma

The Program of Assistance for the Survivors of Torture and Trauma (PASTT) promotes the health and wellbeing of people who have experienced torture and trauma prior to their arrival in Australia. This program has been funded by the Australian Government since 1994.

The objective of PASTT is to promote the physical health and psycho-social recovery of people who have experienced torture and trauma in their countries of origin or while fleeing those countries, prior to their arrival in Australia. PASTT improves clients' access to health, mental health and related mainstream services after they have received the specialist assistance that they need.

Services provided by the torture and trauma organisations include counselling, referral, advocacy,

education and training, and natural therapies. There are eight torture and trauma services in Australia with the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) operating in NSW. www.startts.org.au

Support for Day to Day Living in the Community

The Support for Day to Day Living in the Community (D2DL) Program provides \$46 million over five years to improve the quality of life for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness by providing an additional 7,000 places in structured and socially based activity programs. The initiative recognises that people with severe mental disorders face significant obstacles participating in social activities. Lack of meaningful activities and social roles for these people can contribute to poor recovery and frequent relapse.

The Australian Government has awarded 51 grants totalling more than \$19 million to non-government organisations across Australia in the first phase of the Support for Day to Day Living in the Community initiative. Organisations are being funded to June 2009 to provide over 6,000 places in structured and socially based activity programs for people with severe and persistent mental illness.

New South Wales

Region: Albury

St Luke's Anglicare - \$207,991.25

St Luke's Anglicare will provide 51 medium support places and 23 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Byron Bay/ Tweed Heads

On Track Community Program - \$452,925.00

On Track Community Program will provide 135 medium support places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Campbelltown/ Bowral

Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW - \$654,335.00

Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW will provide 174 medium support places and 44 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Central Coast

New Horizons Enterprises - \$654,168.75

New Horizons Enterprises will provide 162 medium support places and 69 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Liverpool

Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (PRA) - \$654,335.00

PRA will provide 174 medium support places and 44 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Newcastle

Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (PRA) - \$452,925.00

PRA will provide 135 medium support places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Orange

Catholic Healthcare - \$158,108.75

Catholic Healthcare will provide 39 medium support places and 17 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Parramatta

Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW - \$368,883.75

Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW will provide 98 medium support places and 25 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Parramatta Mission - \$401,658.75

Parramatta Mission will provide 81 medium support places and 81 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Penrith

Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (PRA) - \$654,335.00

PRA will provide 174 medium support places and 44 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Ryde

Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW - \$405,641.25

Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW will provide 108 medium support places and 27 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Sydney Inner City

Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (PRA) - \$412,665.00

PRA will provide 123 medium support places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

The Wayside Chapel - \$401,658.75

The Wayside Chapel will provide 81 medium support places and 81 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Ulladulla

Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW - \$170,220.00

Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW will provide 45 medium support places and 12 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Wagga Wagga

Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW - \$215,143.75

Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW will provide 56 medium support places and 17 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

Region: Wollongong

Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (PRA) - \$654,335.00

PRA will provide 174 medium support places and 44 drop-in places to people with severe and persistent mental illness.

* An evaluation of projects funded in phase 1 will inform the roll-out of the program from July 2009. For further information, please email daytodayliving@health.gov.au

National Suicide Prevention Strategy

Support for people at risk of suicide received a major boost with the announcement of \$32.7 million in funding.