

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### General Information

#### *Why is this change in mental health taking place?*

The Commonwealth Government tasked the National Mental Health Commission with conducting a national review of mental health programs and services.

As a result of this review in December 2015 the Australian Government announced reforms to primary mental health care in Australia, to be rolled out over a three year period between 2016 and 2019. The reforms included a number of measures, several of which are to be implemented through Primary Health Networks (PHNs), including a stepped care model across the primary mental health sector.

The Commonwealth directive states:

- Australia will move towards a stepped care model in stages over the next three years.
- Australians will receive varying levels of primary care interventions and support depending on their level of need as determined by a health professional, whether that be 'at risk', mild, moderate or severe/complex.

This will shape the delivery of primary mental health services towards a more modern, flexible and nimble model of care, rather than the current 'one-size-fits-all' approach.

A stepped care approach will enable better targeting and use of digital mental health services, Medicare and practice-based services, and pooled mental health and alcohol and other drugs program funding to support greater emphasis on self-help, early intervention and a reduction in inefficiencies and over-medicalisation.

As part of the Adelaide PHNs mission to improve mental health outcomes across the metropolitan area, Adelaide PHN has selected the organisations who will provide general mental health therapy services.

- **LINKS TO WELLBEING (Consortium group: NEAMI, Uniting Care Wesley Bowden, Mind Australia and MIFSA)** will be the provider in Adelaide's southern and central eastern regions.
- **NORTHERN HEALTH NETWORK** will be the provider in Adelaide's northern and central western regions.

Along with the two major providers, Adelaide PHN has also selected another nine organisations that will provide specialist services including treatment for children and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, including Nunkuwarrin Yunti,

Anglicare, Community Access and Services South Australia, Shine SA, Uniting Communities, Brian Burdekin Clinic, Developing Minds, PANDA and PsychMed. All 11 providers will be linked by a central referral service that commenced operations on **July 4, 2016.**

### ***Who are these services for?***

These services are for people with varying levels of mental health concerns who are suitable to be managed in Primary Care. Adelaide PHN commissioned Primary Mental Health Care Services (PMHCS) incorporates and expands on the services previously provided through Access to Allied Psychological Strategies (ATAPS). Interventions are provided across the stepped care continuum, from a low intensity level for those with mild presentation to clinical care coordination for people with a severe mental health condition. Adelaide PHN commissioned PMHCS has a range of service providers to deliver these services and they can all be referred through the Centralised Referral (fax: **1300 580 249**).

The Adelaide PHN has commissioned service providers to target particular population groups and/or specific geographic areas according to need. Populations that experience greater health challenges but receive disproportionately lower levels of service are considered underserved groups. They can include, but are not limited to:

- people on a low income
- children under 12
- people experiencing homelessness
- established older Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI)
- older people
- socially isolated new and emerging populations
- peri-natal women
- people with comorbid presentations
- individuals who are at risk of suicide or self-harm.
- People who are not eligible or able to access a service through Better Access or MBS funded services.

Please refer to the map that outlines the service providers regions and specialty.

[http://adelaidephn.com.au/assets/Mental\\_Health\\_Services\\_Map.pdf](http://adelaidephn.com.au/assets/Mental_Health_Services_Map.pdf)

## Referrer Information

### ***What's the best service for my client?***

[http://adelaidephn.com.au/assets/MH\\_GP\\_referral\\_pathways\\_flowchart.pdf](http://adelaidephn.com.au/assets/MH_GP_referral_pathways_flowchart.pdf)

As the General Practitioner you can request a specific service for your patient based on presentation and level of need by documenting this on the complete Mental Health Treatment Plan.

Adelaide PHN has commissioned the 2 large services provider (Northern Health Network and Links to Wellbeing Consortium) to facilitate Clinical Decision Making Units which will undertake clinical triage, referral recommendation and further assessment as appropriate.

The flow chart above will assist you in determining if your patient is eligible for a MBS funded psychological services or a PMHCS psychological services. As the referring GP you are still able to make that choice with your patient.

Referrals that are suitable for SA Health based services should continue to be sent via your normal pathway for these services, eg for people with acute presentations call Mental Health Triage 13 14 65.

Send your referrals for PMHCS through the Central Referral for allocation and triage/assessment (fax: **1300 580 249**).

Referrals direct to an MBS (Better Access) provider will need to be sent directly to that provider.

### ***What should I do to prepare for the change in mental health services?***

1. Remove all old brochures and flyers from your waiting room to lessen confusion for clients/patients. Adelaide PHN will provide you with new information brochures.
2. Remove old templates from your clinical software systems that pertain to your previous service providers. This will lessen confusion for staff and also ensure patient referral is received and actioned in a timeframe that assists patients and reduces delays in access.
3. Adelaide PHN will provide new clinical templates to import into your practice software to support electronic preparation of referral information.
4. Templates and instruction manuals for importing clinical templates can be located on Adelaide PHN's website.

### ***When do the changes come into effect?***

Changes to the referral pathway for primary mental health services came into effect as of July 4, 2016.

### ***What is the Primary Mental Health Care Services (PMHCS) Central Referral?***

The Primary Mental Health Care Services (PMHCS) Central Referral will give all Providers/Practices a single access point for all referrals relating to **primary** mental health care services.

The Primary Mental Health Care Services (PMHCS) Central Referral will receive all referrals from the region and allocate the referrals to the most appropriate provider. This will be a same day service which will operate from 9am-4pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) from 4th July this year. The Primary Mental Health Care Services (PMHCS) Central Referral fax number is **1300 580 249**.

The PMHCS Central Referral will be implemented in stages and in the near future will include a phone support number and the ability to include Better Access providers as service providers through the system.

### ***Who do I contact to discuss this further?***

You can contact the Adelaide PHN at [enquiry@adelaidephn.com.au](mailto:enquiry@adelaidephn.com.au) alternatively you can contact one of the 2 large service providers; (Centre East, South) - Links to Wellbeing - Ph: 8326 3591 or for North, Centre West) - the Northern Health Network – Ph: 8209 0700.

### ***How can I provide feedback?***

You can email us at <http://adelaidephn.com.au/contact-us/>

### ***Where can I access the APHN privacy policy?***

[http://adelaidephn.com.au/assets/Privacy\\_Policy.pdf](http://adelaidephn.com.au/assets/Privacy_Policy.pdf)