

New mental health support – over the phone

People with mental health issues – as well as their carers, family and friends – will soon be able to access a unique after-hours telephone help line.

Adelaide's first Lived Experience Telephone Support Service (LETSS) will broaden mental health support in two key ways:

- The trained support staff answering the calls will have a personal lived experience of recovery and managing challenges to their mental health. They will draw on this experience of recovery in their support and understanding of the caller's unique experience.
- The service will be specifically after hours, operating from 5pm to 11.30pm, 365 days a year.

The service will be provided by Links to Wellbeing and funded by Adelaide PHN as part of its mandate to "increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical and mental health services for people, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes". The new service is currently recruiting suitable staff.

Once operational, the LETSS will help people receive real-time information and support regarding mental health issues, and assist them to navigate the mental health system.

"There's nothing quite like this in Australia," said Adelaide PHN CEO, Deb Lee.

"There are telephone services, but the LETSS will combine that immediate access with staff specifically employed because of their lived experience and who are available in the social after-hours window when so many other services are closed."

The LETSS support workers will provide non-clinical mental health support which helps people in times of distress, offer an alternative to attending emergency departments, and assist with access to appropriate in-hours services provided by State, Commonwealth or non-government organisations.

Along with giving callers immediate support, the new service will also provide follow-up support such as scheduled call-backs, welfare checks, and facilitating connection to services.

Access to the service will be via a single dedicated free-call telephone number. Calls to the service will be free of charge (though mobile charges may apply) and callers can remain anonymous if they wish.

The telephone number has yet to be finalised.

(more)

Adelaide PHN would like to thank those who were involved in the co-design working group led by Mental Health Coalition SA and Adelaide PHN.

Working closely and collaboratively with the sector, Adelaide PHN combines expertise with experience to ensure our health system is truly person-centred and provides the people in our region with the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

For more information about Adelaide PHN, please click [here](#).

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