

*“Building one world class
health system for the Gold Coast.”*

NATIONAL PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT (NPS)

Needs Assessment Summary



2018

phn
GOLD COAST

An Australian Government Initiative

National Psychosocial Support

In June 2018 the Commonwealth government announced funding for national psychosocial support measures for people with severe mental illness who are not more appropriately supported through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), to be matched by State and Territory governments through bilateral agreements.

The Commonwealth component of the NPS measure is being implemented through purpose specific funding to Primary Health Networks (PHN) to commission these new services. The PHN commissioned services will need to be implemented in a flexible way to complement the State and Territory funded psychosocial support.

National Psychosocial Support (NPS) provides assistance to individuals of all ages who are significantly affected by severe mental illness, which has an impact on their psychosocial functional capacity but who are not more appropriately funded through the NDIS. These individuals are not case-managed by Gold Coast Health, nor are they receiving services from existing community mental health programs such as Partners in Recovery (PIR) or Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) programs. NPS services, in partnership with families and carers, provide a range of non-clinical, community-based support to help these individuals achieve their recovery goals. This can include individual and group support and rehabilitation services, in both outreach and centre-based settings, focusing on social, recreational, prevocational and physical activities designed to complement existing clinical mental health and physical health services. As a result, NPS should enhance appropriate/optimal use of the health system and simultaneously reduce the need for more intense and acute health services.



Identified local health needs and service issues

- Short-term, non-clinical, recovery-focussed psychosocial support services for people of all ages
- The most frequently identified areas of unmet psychosocial needs include:
 - obtaining employment/volunteering opportunities
 - managing physical health issues
 - engaging in a fulfilling social life
 - participating in daytime activities
- Effective service engagement with people who
 - are from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
 - identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual, pansexual and others (LGBTIQAP+)
 - identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- A local workforce comprised of peer support workers, life coaches and support workers able to provide client-centred, trauma-informed, culturally appropriate and recovery-orientated support in both outreach and centre-based settings
- Space for partnered services for centre-based service provision, which could include, but is not limited to specialist drug and alcohol providers, physical wellbeing and health care providers, vocational workers, employment providers, financial management specialists, family workers, peer workers and homeless, housing and accommodation providers
- Improved service coordination for individuals with severe mental illness and associated psychosocial functional impairment, while considering supports available across levels of governments, the community and relevant sectors
- Promotion of psychosocial services to General Practice and other stakeholders to support complementary use with other primary health interventions
- Efficient referral pathways to increase accessibility to new psychosocial services



Key Findings

- Individual and group psychosocial support and rehabilitation services for clients and their carers/ families that is focussed on building capacity and connectedness at times when it is most needed rather than providing ongoing support
- Greater support and intervention are required to prevent escalation of mental health conditions to avoid crisis and hospital presentations
- Peer workers are acknowledged by both providers and consumers as important supports for people with severe mental health needs, however the present workforce is small
- It is important for consumers to feel empowered to be involved in decision-making about their care and providers have a key role to act as facilitators to enable this
- General Practice is a key point of contact for people with mental health needs, however many GPs feel they do not have the information and resources required to assist patients with severe mental illness to access psychosocial supports

Prevalence, service usage and other data

The total number of people with severe mental health issues in the Gold Coast region is around 20,000 people. The potential cohort of Gold Coast residents who may be eligible for the National Psychosocial Support measure is estimated to be approximately 4,900.

Service usage for the Partners in Recovery (PIR) program should also provide a reasonable approximation for local need for the National Psychosocial Support measure. Approximately 330 unique Gold Coast residents experiencing severe mental health issues access PIR each year on average, with several experienced, local PIR Facilitators reporting the majority of clients access approximately three psychosocial supports per engagement.

This indicates that in any given year the demand for services from the potential client group is likely to be significantly less than the entire potential cohort of people.

GOLD COAST RESIDENTS



People with severe mental health issue.



People eligible for the National Psychosocial Support.



People with severe mental health issues who access PIR per year.

Service Mapping

Non-clinical psychosocial services	Number in GCPHN Region	Distribution	Capacity Discussion
Employment and volunteering	A number of federally-funded employment providers support clients with a disability and these providers also support clients whose primary disability is a mental health issue	Office locations are based across the Gold Coast	Mental Health NGOs provide support and programs for individuals to engage with employment and volunteering, however, most do not have specific programs dedicated to people with Mental Health issues.
Social life/company	9 providers (8 are NGO providers, 1 is an Aboriginal Medical Service, 2 are peer-based providers, 1 employs peer workers).	<p>Programs are a combination of outreach and center-based activities.</p> <p>3 in Southport, 1 in Arundel, 1 in Mermaid Beach, 1 in Varsity Lakes, 1 in Miami, 2 in Robina, 1 in Oxenford, 1 in Bilinga (11 listed due to multiple locations).</p>	<p>Education programs and groups are run by various NGOs aimed at supporting consumers and carers.</p> <p>Active and Healthy Providers who have undertaken Mental Health First Aid Training are noted in the listing on City of Gold Coast website.</p>
Physical health (non-clinical)	8 (7 NGO providers and 1 community-based program, "Active and Healthy," funded by City of Gold Coast with 15 providers available)	Activities funded by City of Gold Coast are located across the entire region.	
Daytime activities	5 providers (3 NGO providers, 1 private provider, 1 community-based program funded by City of Gold Coast with 15 providers available)	<p>Distribution is predominately in Palm Beach, Southport and Currumbin.</p> <p>Activities funded by City of Gold Coast are located across the entire region.</p>	

Consultation

A consultation session regarding potential non-clinical psychosocial services was held in August 2018 and included contributions from twenty-one attendees from the Gold Coast Primary Health Network (GCPHN), the GCPHN Consumer and Carer Advisory and Multidisciplinary Advisory Committees and representatives from Primary and Community Care Services.

The top three ideas from the consultation have been included for four of the five most common unmet needs identified by over 700 local service users who experience severe mental health issues. Psychological distress was identified within the top five unmet need however support for this issue is not considered to be of a psychosocial nature.

Potential psychosocial services to address the need for employment and volunteering opportunities include:

- linking people into a Sheila Shack/Men's Shed
- establishing a work experience program with local employers
- the provision of info/support to connect with local volunteering organisations/businesses that already provide vocational skills that lead to a qualification/certification.

A fulfilling social life is an unmet need frequently identified by local service users. The consultation group suggested several options including:

- social groups (art, games, sports, board games and/or social media-based groups)
- tea time/meal sharing (preparation, serving, eating together)
- men's shed.

Psychosocial support to assist people with severe mental illness to manage physical health issues could include:

- yoga, meditation and/or tai chi classes
- walking/active groups (beach walks, dog walks, hill walks, adventure activities)
- nutrition education facilitated by a registered dietician and including diet plans and cooking groups.

Participation in meaningful daytime activities has also been raised as an unmet need. The consultation group has suggested the possibility of:

- establishing meal preparation service
- self-care and daily living education/programs/workshops that focus on wellbeing including sleep, nutrition and exercise
- mentors/coaches to assist and set daily achievable tasks/schedules.

Gold Coast Primary Health Network

Primary Care Gold Coast (ABN 47152953092), trading as the Gold Coast Primary Health Network.

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