



# Media Release

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## New suicide prevention service for the Gold Coast

The Way Back Support Service, officially launched today on the Gold Coast, will provide three-months-of-support in the critical period after someone has attempted suicide.

The service, designed by Beyond Blue, will be delivered by Wesley Mission Queensland. It was commissioned by Gold Coast Primary Health Network and funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Queensland Health.

This new program builds on the success of the previous Lotus program, to provide longer-term support to vulnerable residents.

The Way Back delivers personalised support to people who have been discharged from Gold Coast University Hospital or Robina Hospital following a suicide attempt or suicidal crisis, helping them to stay safe, to keep connected with others and to access health and community services as part of their recovery.

A Support Facilitator will guide participants through their recovery, including helping build a personalised safety plan and linking them to health and community services, and clinical care if needed.

Beyond Blue's Chief Services Officer, Alastair Stott said The Way Back provides critical support for people after they leave hospital.

"The Way Back addresses a significant value in the current service system and eases people's distress by guiding them towards the right support and informing them about how to stay safe," Mr Stott said.

"Support Facilitators provide people with practical support for improving their situation so they can find their way back to recovery."

Gold Coast Primary Health Network CEO Matt Carrodus said this program is life-changing and life-saving.

"The period just after a suicide attempt is recognised as a high-risk period for reattempts and The Way Back aims to prevent further harm and to help rebuild lives," Mr Carrodus said.

Gold Coast Health's Executive Director for Mental Health and Specialist Services Malcolm McCann said the new service provides important continuity of care after being in hospital.

"The service will help keep people safe after they've been discharged from hospital and provide them with the support they need to recover," said Mr McCann.

Wesley Mission Queensland's Suicide Prevention Services Manager, Pauline Coffey welcomed the new program, which offers those most at-risk in our community increased support.

“This increased funding allows us to hire four and a half full-time Support Facilitators who will meet with clients for up to three months in a very practical way in the community, Ms Coffey said.

“We will connect clients to whatever support services they need, whether that’s establishing a good relationship with a GP, organising a mental health care plan, financial counselling, parenting support or exercise and wellbeing services, and help them get back on their feet. We want to assist Gold Coast people to feel connected to the community, have new supports and feel capable moving forward to be able to manage the stresses that brought them to be in crisis.”

Those who have presented or been discharged from either Robina or Gold Coast University Hospitals are eligible to receive this service. Referrals must be made by Gold Coast Health acute care team.

Details of the Gold Coast Way Back Support Service can be found at:

<https://gcphn.org.au/commissionedservices/the-way-back-support-service-the-way-back>

Mental health professionals are available at the Beyond Blue Support Service via phone 24/7 on 1300 22 4636 or via [www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support) for online chat (3PM – 12AM AEST or email responses within 24 hours).

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