Building a mental health, suicide prevention and alcohol and other drug system that meets people where they are

08:30 - 09:00

Registration

09:00 - 09:25

Welcome to Country and Cultural Therapy: A moving meditation **Lann Levigne**

Paula Rankmore

Program Manager, First Nations Health Equity | Gold Coast Health

09:25 - 09:45

Opening

01 09:45 - 10:30 **Keynote Address | Meeting People Where** They Are: Online

Dr Louise La Sala

Senior Research Fellow | Orygen, Centre for Youth Mental Health, The University of Melbourne

02 10:30 - 10:45 **Executive Welcome Philip Williams**

A/Executive Director, Mental Health and Specialist Services | Gold Coast Health

Matt Carrodus

Chief Executive Officer | Gold Coast Primary Health Network

10:45 - 11:15

Networking Morning Tea

03 11:15 - 12:00 **Panel Discussion | Meeting People at Their** Intersections

Panellists - will include voices from youth homelessness support services, domestic and family violence initiatives, mental health and community response.









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04 12:00 - 12:45 Keynote Address | Deepening Our Understanding of Social & Emotional Wellbeing

Stacey Vervoort

Head of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy Implementation | *Black Dog Institute*

12:45 - 13:30

Networking Lunch

05 13:30 - 14:15 New Service Spotlight | Finding New Ways to Meet People on Their Recovery Journey Addiction In-Home Recovery

AIR Detox

Culture in Mind

Multicultural Communities Council Gold Coast Gold Coast Health

Intellectual and Developmental Disability Community Mental Health Service

Gold Coast Health

06 14:15 - 14:45 Panel Discussion | Connecting Through Community

Panellists - will include voices from perinatal mental health peer workforce, City of Gold Coast, The Men's Table and Gold Coast Medicare Mental Health Centre.

14:45 - 15:00

Closing Remarks

15:00 - 16:00

Networking Afternoon Tea







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Dwayne Grant | MC

Communications Officer | Gold Coast Health - Mental Health and **Specialist Services**

Dwayne Grant is the Communications Officer for Gold Coast Health's Mental Health and Specialist Services division, where he connects teams and communities through strategic storytelling. With a background in journalism and corporate communications, he brings clarity and warmth to every message. As Master of Ceremonies for the 2025 Gold Coast Mental Health Symposium, Dwayne will guide the day with insight and energy. His deep understanding of mental health services makes him a fitting and engaging voice for the event.



Lann Levigne

Chief Executive Officer | Levinge Events

Lann is a proud Kombumerri man and a multi-talented creative immersed in music, film, visual art, and language revitalisation. As a multi-instrumentalist, filmmaker, and designer, he brings cultural stories to life through powerful performances and installations. His work connects the Yugambeh language to community through innovative mediums like soundscapes, dance, and visual storytelling. Deeply committed to First Nations structures, Lann continues to inspire and uplift through his artistry and advocacy.



Paula Rankmore

Program Manager, First Nations Health Equity | Gold Coast Health

Paula Rankmore, a descendant of Susan of the Namoi in the Gamilaraay region, is Program Manager for First Nations Health Equity at Gold Coast Health. She co-designed the service's Health Equity Strategies and created Culture Therapy—an innovative model integrating First Nations arts and storytelling into healthcare. Paula's work amplifies First Nations voices and embeds cultural knowledge into health systems. Her leadership bridges healing, language, and innovation to promote culturally safe, holistic care.



Dr Louise La Sala

Senior Research Fellow | Orygen

Dr Louise La Sala is a Research Fellow at Orygen and a global leader in youth suicide prevention. She leads the internationally recognised #chatsafe initiative, co-designing digital interventions with young people that have reached over 12 million globally. Her work has shaped policy, partnered with major tech platforms, and created safer online spaces. In 2025, she received the Andrej Marušič Award for her pioneering contributions to youth mental health.







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Phillip Williams

A/Executive Director, Mental Health and Specialist Services | Gold **Coast Health**

Philip Williams is the Acting Executive Director of Mental Health and Specialist Services at Gold Coast Health, with over 20 years of experience in mental health leadership. His career spans early psychosis intervention, allied health therapy, and community-based programs, with a strong focus on youth and culturally diverse populations. Philip is passionate about building integrated, person-centred systems that meets people where they are.



Matthew Carrodus

Chief Executive Officer | Gold Coast Primary Health Network

Matt Carrodus is CEO of Gold Coast Primary Health Network, with over 20 years' leadership experience across health, disability, and aged care. He has led the development of integrated care systems and community consultation networks to improve outcomes for vulnerable populations. Matt's work includes founding Primary Care Gold Coast and establishing the first General Practice/Hospital Liaison Unit. He is committed to embedding person-centred care and strengthening partnerships across the sector.



Matthew Slavin

Team Leader | Gold Coast Youth Service

Matt Slavin has over 20 years' experience in youth homelessness and child protection. He operationalised Queensland's first purpose-built Youth Foyer, which received the City of Gold Coast Safer Suburbs Award for Innovation. Matt blends evidence, creativity, and a dash of irreverence to spark practical change.



Rebecca Lang

Chief Executive Officer | QNADA

Rebecca Lang is the CEO of the Queensland Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies (QNADA) and Chair of the Australian Alcohol and Other Drugs Council. She also serves on the Advisory Board of the National Centre for Youth Substance Use Research. A strong advocate for evidence-based, health-focused responses to substance use, Rebecca champions collaboration, quality improvement, and reducing stigma. Her insights will enrich discussions on how social determinants shape mental health and substance use.







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Bernie Quinlan

Manager, QPS Vulnerable Persons Group | Queensland Police Service Inspector Bernie Quinlan leads the Vulnerable Persons Group within the Queensland Police Service, overseeing strategic responses to mental health, disability, and elder abuse. With over 27 years of experience across diverse policing roles, he is dedicated to improving outcomes for vulnerable Queenslanders. He drives policy, training, and reform to ensure police responses are compassionate, evidence-informed, and collaborative. Inspector Quinlan advocates for strong partnerships between police, health, and community sectors to support individuals in crisis.



Stacey Vervoort

Head of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy Implementation | Black Dog Institute

Stacey is a Gamilaroi woman and Head of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy Implementation at the Black Dog Institute. With qualifications in psychology, she specialises in culturally responsive wellbeing services and organisational consultancy. Her work spans cultural safety reviews, First Peoples workforce programs, and holistic support for individuals and communities. Stacey brings deep expertise in Indigenist approaches to mental health and social and emotional wellbeing.



Dr Hok Yee Siu

Medical Director | AIR Detox

Dr Hok Siu is the Co-founder and Medical Director of AIR Detox, an inhome withdrawal service offering safe, private detox support. With a background in emergency and primary care, he created AIR to bridge gaps between hospital detox and community services. The program now partners with Gold Coast PHN to provide funded detox places via local referrals. Dr Siu is passionate about improving access and building stronger recovery pathways.



Monica Widman

Senior Mental Health Recovery Worker | Multicultural Communities **Council Gold Coast and Cura**

Monica Widman is the Senior Mental Health Recovery Worker at Culture in Mind, part of MCCGC, where she supports culturally responsive care for diverse communities. A qualified social worker completing her Master of Professional Psychology, she brings experience across domestic violence, child protection, and community wellbeing. Monica leads person-centred initiatives that honour cultural identity and empower individuals to achieve their goals. Her work reflects a deep belief in the power of culturally safe support to drive meaningful change.







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Dr Solomon Shatananda

Consultant Psychiatrist | Gold Coast Health - Mental Health and **Specialist Services**

Dr Shatananda is a dual-trained psychiatrist in Intellectual and Developmental Disability and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, with experience across Australia and the UK. He leads the Gold Coast Intellectual Disability Mental Health Service, bringing rare expertise in neurodevelopmental disorders and complex clinical care. A Senior Lecturer at Griffith University, he provides expert consultation, education, and drives service development. His work focuses on improving diagnostic pathways and embedding evidence-informed practices to enhance care for people with IDD.



Dr Harini Sundaravadanam

Medical Director SPAODS | Gold Coast Health - Mental Health and Specialist **Services**

Dr Harini Sundaravadanam is Medical Director for Specialist Programs and AOD Services at Gold Coast Health, and a Senior Consultant Psychiatrist with expertise in child and adolescent mental health, IDD, and trauma-informed care. She leads clinical strategy and integrated models of care for diverse populations. At the 2025 Gold Coast Mental Health Symposium, she will co-present on the new IDD initiative, highlighting collaborative approaches to improving outcomes.



Vivianne Kissane

Chief Executive Officer | Peach Tree Perinatal Wellness

Viv founded Peach Tree Perinatal Wellness in 2011 after her own experience with perinatal mental illness and maternal suicide loss. As CEO, she leads peer-led programs supporting families in the First 2000 Days, with a focus on culturally responsive, lived experience care. Viv has contributed to policy, workforce development, and national consultation in mental health. In 2022, she was awarded an Order of Australia medal for her work in community mental health.



Sam Hughes

Physical Activity and Wellbeing Leader | City of Gold Coast

Sam Hughes is Coordinator of the City of Gold Coast's Active & Healthy Program, with over 20 years' experience promoting community wellbeing and inclusion. She has led the program's growth into one of Queensland's most successful initiatives. Sam drives collaborative projects that improve physical and mental health outcomes and strengthen the local wellness sector. A passionate advocate for active living, she champions lasting change across the Gold Coast.







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Jon Mewett

Head of Strategic Growth & Partnerships | Open Minds / Medicare Mental Health Centre

Jon Mewett has over 15 years' experience across disability, mental health, and ageing sectors, designing inclusive services grounded in lived experience. He's led co-designed initiatives like the upcoming Medicare Mental Health Centre on the Gold Coast. Jon's approach blends strategy, collaboration, and community insight to navigate complex challenges. He also supports community enterprises that turn good ideas into sustainable, wellbeing-focused practice.

Ben Moffatt

Table Program Lead | The Men's Table

Ben Moffatt has over 25 years' experience in community and mental health, with a focus on supporting boys and men. He's worked across outreach, counselling, training, and team leadership, and is a long-time Mental Health First Aid Instructor. Ben's work promotes wellbeing through policy development, community initiatives, and inclusive support programs.



Regional Host Queensland and Northern Rivers | The Men's Table

Wayne is a Regional Host with The Men's Table. After 27 years in construction and mining, and facing his own mental health challenges as a husband and father, he has hung up the hard-hat now works full time in the counselling mental health and wellbeing space. He is passionate about breaking down stigmas, raising awareness, and normalising conversations around mental health. Just as physical health applies to us all, so too does mental health. His adage is "to thrive not just survive".



Chief Executive Officer | Primary and Community Care Services

Dr J.R. Baker is Chair of ASPIRE and CEO of PCCS, leading national efforts in social prescribing and community wellbeing. He is also Associate Professor at Southern Cross University and serves on several mental health boards. With over 25 years in health and social care, his work focuses on integrating personalised, community-based approaches into complex care systems.







