



PROJECT UPDATE: WA INTEGRATED ATLAS OF MENTAL HEALTH, ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG SERVICES

Background

The WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) is currently undertaking a range of projects to ready itself and the broader sector for the commissioning of mental health services in late 2016. A key project is the development of an Integrated Atlas of Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services for WA – one for Country WA and one each for the Perth North and Perth South metropolitan areas.

In addition to the Atlas, a hospital transition pathways project will also be undertaken. This will map existing transition pathways for people presenting with mental health/Alcohol and other Drug (AoD) issues at one of four major WA hospitals (Sir Charles Gairdner, Rockingham, Albany and Joondalup).

Brisbane based ConNetica Consulting is contracted to deliver the project which is jointly funded by WAPHA and the State Government through the Mental Health Commission (MHC) and the Department of Health.

What is an Integrated Atlas?

Atlases of Mental Health (including AoD services) are decision making and system planning tools. They integrate information on social and demographic characteristics, health-related needs, service availability and care capacity. Atlases detect gaps and benchmark areas for change and help inform the commissioning process.

The project methodology has been in use across Europe for over 20 years, and has been applied in six other Primary Health Network regions in Australia since 2014.

The WA Integrated Atlas of Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services project commenced in March 2016.

The WA Integrated Atlas of Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Services is a significant undertaking and is the first time an entire state has been mapped at once.

The services being mapped.

There are three essential criteria for services and programs to be included in the Integrated Atlas:

- The service must be publicly available or accessible i.e. a free service.
- 20% or more of the users of a particular service have /mental health and/or and alcohol or drug issues and the service provider adapts its service accordingly;
- The service must be stable or ongoing i.e. likely to be available for three years in the future.

Stakeholder engagement

A comprehensive stakeholder list of mental health and alcohol and drug services has been developed to ensure all relevant groups are captured. Service providers were identified during project scoping interviews with peak bodies, from the dedicated Atlas project page on WAPHA's website, during interviews with large service providers, extracted from the Health Pathways services, through Primary Health Networks, the Green Book and from MHC funded AoD services.

Project status

Most public mental health services and large service providers have already been contacted, with in-depth interviews occurring with almost 40 NGO service providers that deliver a range of programs and services across WA to support people and their families with mental illness, alcohol or other drug issues. The remaining interviews are expected to be completed by mid-July.

In addition, senior staff in Perth North Metro and Perth South Metro Mental Health Services and the WA Country Health Service were interviewed at length.

Each interview lasts around two hours and maps the type of programs and services delivered, where the service is delivered, hours of operation and the characteristics of the teams delivering that service.

In addition to holding personal interviews, approximately 300 other metropolitan and regional providers will be progressively invited over the coming weeks to complete an on-line survey. The first survey invitations were sent on 8 June to providers in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions followed by the South West and Great Southern regions in late June/early July respectively. Primary Health Networks will encourage and support their local stakeholders to complete the survey.

ConNetica can also assist providers by telephone to complete the survey.

As a way to better understand the local context and to facilitate survey participation, ConNetica is conducting three workshops in Northam, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie involving service providers in rural and remote locations.

What happens next?

Peak bodies are asked to encourage their networks to participate in the on-line survey and support the development of the Integrated Atlas of Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Services in Western Australia.

The next project update will be provided in early August after interviews and surveys have been completed.

Any further questions?

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