

New mental health support service for people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

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The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Psychological Service, expected to launch in September, will support those who find it difficult to use mainstream mental health services because of language and cultural barriers.

WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA), the operator of the state's three Primary Health Networks, has engaged Life Without Barriers to manage the delivery of the service. Clinics will be based in Mirrabooka, Cannington and Leederville, and service the surrounding areas.

The service will offer face-to-face culturally appropriate support for those with mild-to-moderate mental health issues whilst providing some care coordination to those needing assistance to access additional healthcare services.

WA Primary Health Alliance General Manager, Mark Cockayne, said people from CALD backgrounds have a significantly lower level of access to mental health care and support in the wider community, due to stigma, language and cultural issues.

"The service will be delivered through a combination of clinic-based appointments, home visits and/or in-reach services to help overcome these barriers," Mr Cockayne said.

Federal Member for Stirling, Vince Connelly, said the new service is a welcome addition to the City of Stirling.

"Providing culturally sensitive services, such as the CALD Psychological Service, is vital to ensuring our CALD community access the support they need, with minimal barriers," Mr Connelly said.

Life Without Barriers WA State Director, Jennie Burns, said social isolation and cultural disconnection are major contributors to mental health issues amongst CALD populations.

"We have a dedicated team of workers, including a CALD peer support worker. The service will include access to CALD specific group sessions to help clients stay connected with their community and develop an increased awareness of mental health and wellbeing.

"Along with access to interpreters if needed, our team of psychologists, each fluent in a different language, will be available to support clients throughout their time with the service, Ms Burns said.

Clients can access the service by being referred by their General Practitioner, health services, school psychologist and other allied health practitioners.

This service has been made possible through funding provided by the Australian Government under the PHN Program.

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