

WA Primary Health Alliance's Mental Health Initiatives

Overview

WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) does not directly provide mental health services, but rather commissions services from a wide range of providers including community managed organisations and health service providers. WAPHA invests more than \$55 million annually into primary mental healthcare services (with an additional \$15-20m for the National Psychosocial Support Measure).

The focus of WAPHA's mental health commissioning is primarily to support people experiencing mild-moderate mental health issues (including people living in rural and remote areas), who experience barriers to accessing the Medicare Benefit Scheme Better Access program and therefore require additional support to access similar care.

WAPHA also funds discrete initiatives to support clinical care coordination of people with severe mental illness, psychosocial supports, headspace centres and other initiatives outlined below.

WAPHA works with general practices and service providers to support and promote a primary care system in which an individual's physical health and mental health care needs are treated holistically.

Scope

The scope of WAPHA's mental health initiatives continue to evolve in alignment with the [Australian Government's mental health guidance materials](#).

Aboriginal Mental Health Services

WAPHA commissions culturally appropriate mental health, alcohol and other drug and suicide prevention services, for Aboriginal people across Western Australia.

Services aim to improve access to counselling and to medical and non-medical professional services for individuals who experience mental illness and/or problematic alcohol and substance use issues.

For more information on WAPHA's Aboriginal mental health

initiatives, please see (insert link for Fact Sheet 16: Aboriginal Mental Health Initiatives).

Alcohol and other Drug Services

WAPHA invests more than \$12 million annually into the delivery of health services relating to alcohol and other drugs (AOD), including a number of initiatives to improve access to services designed specifically to support people who experience co-occurring mental health and AOD issues.

WAPHA also commissions education and training to build the capability and confidence of the AOD, mental health and primary care workforce to respond to people experiencing co-occurring mental health and AOD issues.

For more information on WAPHA's Mental Health and AOD initiatives, please see [Fact Sheet 15: The interface between mental health issues and alcohol and other drugs](#)

Alliance Against Depression

Alliance Against Depression is an approach based on evaluated trials and is recognised as the world's best practice for the care of people with depression and in the prevention of suicidal acts.

The approach seeks to raise awareness of depression and increase the number of people who seek treatment by reducing stigma around depression and suicide.

WAPHA supports local Alliances with resources, tools, and case studies.

More information about Alliance Against Depression can be found on [Primary Health Exchange](#)

Choices

The Choices program connects vulnerable and disadvantaged people with critical social and mental health support as they are discharged from justice services and emergency departments.

Choices utilises a peer support model, whereby peer workers draw on their lived experience to help people in crisis to access supports such as accommodation and treatment for mental health, alcohol and other drug issues.

headspace

headspace provides early intervention mental health services across Western Australia, for 12-25 year olds.

Services are free or low cost and are designed to provide early access for young people and their families to receive the help they need for problems affecting their wellbeing.

headspace offers a holistic approach to supporting young people through four core areas: mental health, physical (including sexual) health, alcohol and other drug services, and work and study support.

WAPHA commissions Western Australia's thirteen headspace services, in Albany, Armadale, Broome, Bunbury, Fremantle, Geraldton, Joondalup, Kalgoorlie, Mandurah, Midland, Osborne Park, the Pilbara and Rockingham. Four new headspace satellites (Margaret River, Busselton, Northam and Esperance) will be open in 2020 and four new centres (Cannington, Kununurra, Port Hedland and Karratha) will be opening in 2021.

HealthPathways WA

Administered by WA Primary Health Alliance, HealthPathwaysWA is an online portal that provides clinicians with clear and concise guidance for assessing, managing and referring patients (including those experiencing mental health issues) across Western Australia.

The pathways are developed by a collaboration between health practitioners, drawing on clinical and practical knowledge from GPs, hospital specialists and allied health professionals.

More information can be found on the [HealthPathways WA website](#)

Initial Assessment and Referral service

WAPHA is developing a state-wide initial assessment and referral (IAR) service for GPs and other referrers that will improve the consistency and quality of patient intake, assessment and referral, thereby leading to better treatment outcomes for individuals.

Inside My Mind

Inside My Mind is a campaign to help people recognise depression in their own lives, or in someone they know, and direct them to support. The campaign included the commissioning of four artworks, based on individual experiences of depression.

More information can be found at [insidemymind.org.au](#)

Mental health primary care coordination

The mental health primary care coordination activity engages mental health care coordinators to help provide coordinated clinical care for people with complex mental illness and to minimise preventable hospitalisation.

Mental Health Portal

The Mental Health Portal provides a stepped care approach (for information on Stepped Care approaches, please refer to [Fact Sheet 7: What is Mental Health Stepped Care?](#) or people with, or at risk of, mental health conditions in regional Western Australia.

The Mental Health Portal is comprised of clinical care coordination, low intensity and psychological therapy phone-based and web-based services and community treatment services.

National Psychosocial Support Measure

The National Psychosocial Support Measure provides psychosocial support services for people with a severe mental illness who aren't eligible for assistance under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

WAPHA commissions the following activities under the National Psychosocial Support Measure:

Psychosocial continuity services for previous participants of Partners in Recovery (PIR), Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs), and Day to Day Living (D2DL) programs who are assessed as ineligible for transition to the NDIS.

Transition support services to assist with testing NDIS eligibility and to receive interim services for those awaiting an NDIS eligibility decision as at 30 June 2019.

Psychosocial support services for new clients with severe mental illness requiring psychosocial supports. These services are for people who are not more appropriately supported through the NDIS and were not previously clients of PIR, PHaMs and D2DL as of 30 June 2019.

PORTS

The Practitioner Online Referral Treatment Service (PORTS) provides free, high quality mental health assessment and treatment to Western Australians aged 16 and over who are experiencing challenges related to low mood, anxiety or substance use.

The aim of the program is to streamline the referral process to ensure people access the right care, at the right time, in the right location.

More information regarding can be found at [ports.org.au](#)

Psychological Therapies for People with Mental Illness Living in Residential Aged Care Facilities

WAPHA commissions evidence-based psychological therapies for people living in residential aged care facilities. Services are for residents of these facilities with a diagnosed mental illness and those at risk of mental illness.

Suicide Prevention programs

WAPHA is leading three Suicide Prevention Trials in Western Australia, located in the Kimberley, Midwest and the Peel, (Rockingham and Kwinana) regions.

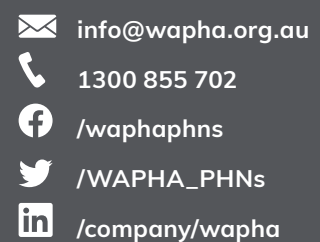
These locations have been chosen by the Australian Government due to the higher than average suicide rates experienced.

The trials aim to find the most effective approaches to suicide prevention for at-risk populations and share this knowledge across Australia. The key populations targeted by each of the trial sites are:

- **Kimberley:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians
- **Midwest:** Men aged 25 to 54, specifically farmers, fishers and fly in, fly out (FIFO) workers
- **Peel, Rockingham and Kwinana:** Young people between the ages of 16 to 24

The trials also aim to build awareness and capacity in the community, so they can provide the relevant support to people locally.

Further information regarding WAPHA's commissioned activity can be found on the [WAPHA website](#).



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This is one of a series of factsheets regarding mental health and primary health care, developed by WAPHA. Further factsheets and other resources can be found at www.wapha.org.au/mental-health-framework. The information in this factsheet was accurate at December 2020.