

Service Provider Connect



WA Primary Health Alliance acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Owners and Elders of this country and recognises the significant importance of their cultural heritage, values and beliefs and how these contribute to the positive health and wellbeing of the whole community.



Service Provider Connect #83 - 9 February 2023

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General Manager's foreword

Welcome to our first edition of Service Provider Connect for 2023 as we look ahead at what is shaping up to be an exciting year ahead.

As part of progressive implementation of the Performance Management Framework across all program areas, we will be engaging and consulting with our alcohol and other drugs and chronic conditions providers in the coming weeks and months.

Expansion of activities in aged care and mental health have been of particular focus in the past months with a number of opportunities recently released to the sector – we look forward to providing more information shortly regarding these outcomes.

The [Strengthening Medicare Taskforce Report](#) was released on Friday 3 February and a number of its recommendations have explicit roles for PHNs as part of strengthening primary health care.

The Taskforce, which began mid-2022, built on Australia's [Primary Health Care 10 Year Plan](#) 2022-32 and focused on:

- Improving patient access to general practice, including after hours
- Improving patient access to GP-led multidisciplinary team care, including nursing and allied health
- Making primary care more affordable for patients
- Improving prevention and management of ongoing and chronic conditions
- Reducing pressure on hospitals.

Coupled with the recent Evaluation of the Better Access initiative there is considerable momentum for change emerging for the Australian Government, and in pursuit of improved outcomes for our communities.

Regards,

Mark Cockayne
General Manager Commissioned Services

Procurement and Contracting

WAPHA Commissioning Tender Notification

WA Primary Health Alliance has released the following Request for Tender:

- RFT 2023-1 - Office-based & online video call face-to-face delivered psychological treatment in the Perth metropolitan area

This Request is for the provision of the face-to-face psychological treatment component which will be office-based and/or online video call to the referred individuals from the Mindspot GP service. Generally, this is for individuals who have mild to moderate mental disorders (most commonly anxiety and depression).

The tender close date is 1 March 2023, and the tender documents can be found [here](#).

Please note that in order to receive tender notifications, service providers must be registered by subscribing [here](#).

Commissioning Update

Care finders contracts awarded

Targeting senior Australians needing an enhanced level of assistance to interact with the Australian Government's My Aged Care system and access aged care community supports, contracts to operate the new service have recently been awarded to 14 organisations, following an open tender process.

The new care finder service will be available to people 65 years or older (50 years for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people or people 50 years or older (45 years or older for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people) on a low income and homeless or at risk of being homeless who:

- Need intensive support to understand and access aged care services as well as to connect with any other supports they need, such as health, housing services, and social supports; and

- Could otherwise fall through the cracks due to isolation, communication or cognitive issues, or a history of past experiences with institutions or government.

Find out more [here](#).

Current Status of WAPHA's commissioned services tenders

Tender No	Service Description	Status
RFT2022-2	Head to Health Adult Mental Health Centre (Armadale) and Satellite (Gosnells)	Closed - Evaluation Stage
Rft2022-3	Head to Health Adult Mental Health Satellite (Balga/Mirrabooka)	Closed – Evaluation Stage

WAPHA's commissioned services can be found on the WAPHA website [here](#) and via the My Community Directory [here](#).

WAPHA commissioning acknowledgement and brand guidelines

A friendly reminder for contracted service providers that, as part of the service agreement and activity schedule conditions, it is a requirement that WAPHA activity branding is applied. This relates to:

- Any website, document, email or other publication that advertises or displays the activity; and
- In a publicly disseminated activity material, produced with the activity fees or a part of the activity.

To support providers, we have developed acknowledgement and brand guidelines [here](#).

Federal Budget and Standard Indexation Supplementation payments to community sector organisations

A number of contracted service providers have contacted WA Primary Health Alliance regarding additional funding supplementation as part of their service agreement.

In the Federal Government's 2022-23 – Budget Paper No. 2, reference was made to an additional \$560million over four years from 2022-23 to support community sector organisations in need of funding supplementation due to additional staff wages and higher inflation outcomes.

As part of this funding, \$17.1million over four years was allocated for the Department of Health and Aged Care (DHAC). Further information on the budget paper can be found [here](#) on page 31.

WAPHA has followed up this budget item with the DHAC on a number of occasions, however we have been advised it is still under consideration, and PHNs have been told it is unlikely that this supplementation funding will be allocated to PHNs to pass to commissioned service providers.

General Information

Strengthening Medicare Taskforce Report

The Strengthening Medicare Taskforce report was released on 3rd February. Equity of health outcomes was at the centre of the Taskforce's discussions, focussing on how best to give all Australians what they want and need in their healthcare system, to help design a primary care system that delivers person-centred, integrated and connected care - a system that aims to provide wrap around care for those that need it most. The Taskforce report contains recommendations centred around key areas:

1. Increasing access to primary care
2. Encouraging multidisciplinary team care
3. Modernising primary care
4. Supporting change management and cultural change

WA Primary Health Alliance was actively engaged in the Taskforce focus and discussions, having provided numerous related submissions to the 10 Year Primary Health Care Plan, the Senate GP Workforce Inquiry and being represented on the Taskforce by our CEO, Leanne Durrington. An expanded role for PHNs across the Taskforce recommendations is evident and more detail will be forthcoming in the May Federal budget as to the activities and funding allocations. WAPHA, together with PHNs nationally, is currently considering the Taskforce report recommendations and their implications for PHNs directly, our commissioned service providers, GPs and allied health professionals.

View the Report recommendations [here](#).

Better Access Evaluation

The Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and General Practitioners through the Medicare Benefits Schedule Initiative (Better Access) has been in operation since 2006.

The Better Access takes the form of a series of item numbers on the Medicare Benefits Schedule for which the Australian Government provides a rebate to consumers to assist in meeting the costs.

The University of Melbourne was commissioned to undertake an evaluation of Better Access across the following domains:

- Accessibility
- Responsiveness
- Appropriateness
- Effectiveness
- Sustainability.

The evaluation pointed to some consistent findings about Better Access in terms of outcomes and access including:

- Those who receive treatment through Better Access tend to have positive outcomes, irrespective of how outcomes are measured.
- The reach of Better Access has continued to expand, with more than 10% of the Australian population receiving any Better Access service in 2021 and around 5 per cent receiving at least one session of psychological treatment through the program.
- The evaluation suggests that particular groups are differentially affected by issues of access. Better Access is certainly serving some groups better than others, and these gaps are widening. Of most concern, increases in utilisation over time disproportionately favour people on relatively higher incomes in major cities.

Read the executive summary including the findings and conclusions [here](#).

Perinatal Mental Health Promotion Grants 2023

The Statewide Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Program is a non-clinical service providing support to Western Australian health and community professionals who work with families, as well as consumers. The program includes education and training, health promotion initiatives, service coordination and support for clinical networks and research.

As part of World Maternal Mental Health Day (3 May 2023), the Statewide Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Program is offering grants up to \$1,000 to

government, non-government and not-for-profit agencies across WA, to host local events / activities.

More information on the grant program can be found [here](#).

Healthdirect Multicultural Health Connect helpline pilot

Healthdirect Australia has launched a pilot in of a new helpline designed to help culturally and linguistically diverse parts of the population access health information, including triage of their health symptoms by a registered nurse on the healthdirect helpline.

To help non-English speaking people navigate the Australian health care system, the helpline also answers questions about health services, Medicare and private health care options.

More information on the helpline can be found [here](#).

National Safety and Quality Primary and Community Healthcare

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare (the Commission) is developing the National Safety and Quality Primary and Community Healthcare Standards Guide for Healthcare Services (the Guide) to provide support for healthcare services implementing the Primary and Community Healthcare Standards. It includes practical guidance and examples of evidence that can be used to implement the actions in a way that is appropriate to the healthcare service.

The consultation process on the draft content for the guide is now open and feedback can be provided to the Commission by 28 February 2023.

More information on the guide can be found [here](#).

Exemption to subsection 19(2) of the Health Insurance Act 1973 for GPs practicing at regional and remote headspace services

An exemption to subsection 19(2) of the Health Insurance Act 1973 was announced as part of the March 2022-23 Budget.

This initiative has been designed to provide headspace services the opportunity to enhance GP remuneration using headspace grants or other

funding streams to supplement eligible MBS billings. This may ease some of the challenges in attracting and retaining GPs by offering them access to guaranteed income in contracted arrangements including leave, superannuation, and salary packaging where they are salaried under this initiative.

The exemption will permit GPs at eligible headspace services, who currently receive salaries or other payments from lead agencies, to also bill against 28 eligible MBS items.

The exemption will take effect from 1 February 2023.

For further information please contact the Youth Mental Health Section at YMHInputs@health.gov.au.

Targeted regional initiatives for suicide prevention

New suicide prevention funding will allow the WA Primary Health Alliance to commission targeted initiatives across Western Australia, following tried and tested systems-based approaches.

Recent Australian Government guidance gives Primary Health Networks (PHNs) flexibility to consider modified or new priority activities based on learnings from the National Suicide Prevention Trial (the Trial), which ended in December 2022. In Western Australia (WA), this included three sites: the Kimberley, the Midwest, and Peel, Rockingham and Kwinana.

The new funding will be used for targeted suicide prevention initiatives in communities across the state identified as high need and will no longer be limited to the former Trial sites. While PHNs will receive a reduced amount of funding, compared to previous individual Trial site funding, broader parameters will provide the opportunity to benefit new regions.

More information on the initiatives can be found [here](#).

headspace Hedland Opens its doors

headspace Hedland has opened its doors, providing young people, their families and friends access to youth friendly support for their mental health and wellbeing.

Anglicare WA, appointed as lead agency to run the new centre, has utilised their strong local partnerships and connection with the region's young people in the development of this new headspace service.

It will provide the full range of headspace services including mental health, physical and sexual health, work and study support and alcohol and other drug services.

[Read the media release.](#)

Family Domestic and Sexual Violence Budget Commitment

The Australian Government announced in the 2022-23 budget that it will be investing \$48.7 million over four years (from 2022-23 to 2025-26) to support victims and survivors of family, domestic and sexual violence and child sex abuse to navigate the health system (see attached release).

This funding will expand the existing Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) Primary Health Network pilots in NSW, Victoria and Queensland, and establish a FDV pilot in each state and territory; and integrate models of support for victims-survivors of sexual violence and child sexual abuse. The pilots aim to provide increased support to primary care providers to assist in the early identification and intervention of family, domestic and sexual violence and sexual abuse, and ensure coordinated referrals to support services. PHN's are being directed to utilise the models developed in the existing eastern state pilots for this program expansion.

WAPHA has recently been invited to submit an application to a restricted grant round which we expect to open for four weeks in February 2023.

As this is a new area of activity for WAPHA, team members will be reaching out to key stakeholders in the coming weeks to inform our approach to the grant application and ensure that the additional investment contributes to addressing local needs and adds value to the existing service system.

In these early stages of consultation we are keen to draw on the knowledge and expertise of service providers with a current contract to WAPHA.

Please contact Susan Kay or Kate Cross if you have relevant data and insights that can inform the project planning and the grant application that WAPHA will make to the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care.

Susan.kay@wapha.org.au or kate.cross@wapha.org.au

Webinars, events, education and training