

# Psychological treatment services for people with mental illness living in residential aged care facilities

## Overview

This program is about supporting people who are living in residential aged care facilities and are diagnosed with, or at risk of developing, a mild to moderate mental illness.

The aim is to give these residents access to similar services as those currently available in the community and will involve collaborating with the facilities themselves to provide evidenced-based, timely psychological therapies.

Mental health professionals such as psychologists, social workers and mental health nurses will deliver psychological care to residents, who will generally require a referral beforehand.

It's all part of Primary Health Tasmania's work commissioning psychological support services designed for people living in residential aged care, intended to complement the personal care, accommodation, physical and social support they receive from their facility.

## Eligibility

This program's support services are intended for residents who:

- are assessed as experiencing early signs of a diagnosable mental illness and are at risk of developing one over the following 12 months if they do not receive appropriate care
- have already been diagnosed with a mild to moderate mental illness
- have a severe mental illness and are not more appropriately managed by the Tasmanian Government's Older Persons Mental Health Service.

The definition of mental illness for this project is consistent with MBS Better Access Items, and as a result, dementia and delirium are not regarded as mental illness.

However, people with dementia who also have a mental illness such as anxiety or depression are eligible for the support services.

Residents may also be eligible if they:

- are having significant transition issues and experiencing adjustment disorders or abnormal symptoms of grief and loss
- have a history of mental illness and received services before being admitted, which could not be continued
- have experienced elder abuse or trauma

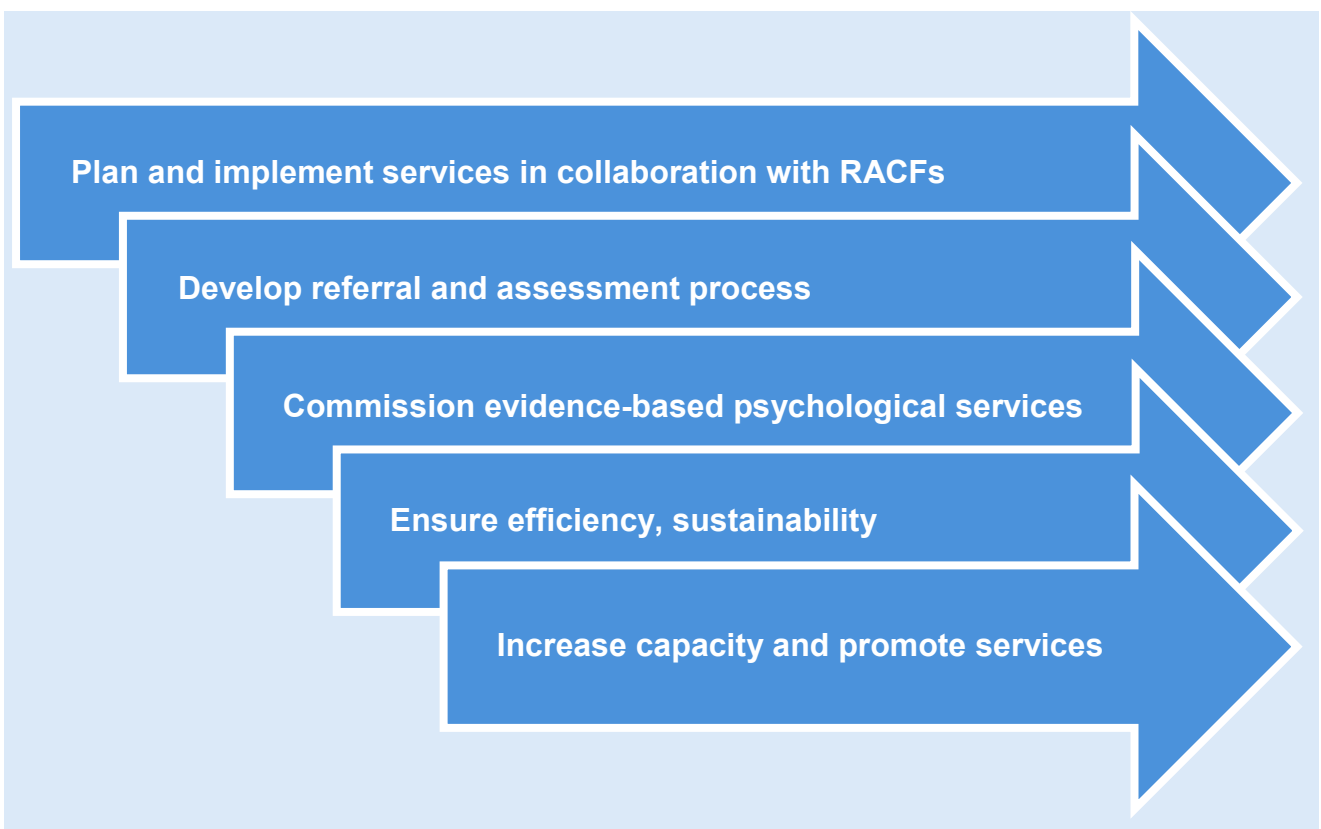
- are from diverse and vulnerable communities, such as LGBTIQ or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) groups.

## Outcomes

The psychological services supported by this program will be adapted to meet the needs of each specific residential aged care facility and the people that live there.

To do this, Primary Health Tasmania undertook consultation with residential aged care facilities in early 2019.

The feedback provided will assist in the design of services, which may trial new service models or build on existing arrangements, which are scheduled to be gradually introduced from 1 July 2019. This type of program is new to many residential aged care facilities, and it is anticipated its reach will expand over time.



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