

Media release

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Site for new Devonport Medicare Mental Health Centre

A ‘home’ has been confirmed for Devonport’s new Medicare Mental Health Centre, which will increase access to free mental health support for people living in the area.

Primary Health Tasmania general manager Alison O’Neill said a lease has been signed for premises at 11-17 Stewart Street Devonport, which were formerly offices of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

“This is a major step towards establishing this new centre, which will join the existing Medicare Mental Health Centre in Launceston,” Ms O’Neill said.

“Now that the lease has been signed, we can proceed with the building and fit-out works needed to make the site suitable for its new purpose.

“We will continue to work closely with service provider Stride Mental Health, with the aim of opening the centre in July this year.”

The Australian Government is funding the establishment of Medicare Mental Health Centres across Australia, through local Primary Health Networks (PHNs). The centres provide a safe and welcoming place for anyone to access free, quality mental health care over extended hours.

Primary Health Tasmania (Tasmania PHN) has commissioned Stride – operator of the existing Launceston centre – to establish and deliver services from new Medicare Mental Health Centres in Devonport, Burnie and outer Hobart.

Medicare Mental Health Centres are a welcoming ‘no wrong door’ entry point for people in distress or crisis who need immediate support, as well as family and friends needing information and advice.

There is no charge, and appointments aren’t needed. A Medicare card is not needed either.

Stride CEO Drikus van der Merwe said the exact timing of service commencement from the Devonport site will depend on factors including the fit-out process and recruitment of a suitable workforce.

“Importantly, we have already started a telehealth service which means people don’t have to wait for the Devonport centre to open – they can receive phone support now,” Mr van der Merwe said.

“People can call Medicare Mental Health on 1800 595 212 between 8.30am and 5pm, Monday to Friday and based on their needs, be connected to a mental health clinician.

“This telehealth service is also available to people in the Burnie and outer Hobart areas, pending establishment of those centres.”

Mr van der Merwe said Stride has been gradually building its Tasmanian workforce in preparation for the phased introduction of the three new centres.

“Our Launceston team is making a real difference in supporting people in that region, and we're looking forward to extending that positive impact to communities in other parts of the state,” he said.

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