

# **Our activity work plan for 2025-28 - primary mental health care**

**Updated 2025**

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## Overview

Primary Health Tasmania has implemented a single 'project' approach designed to better support consumer needs from prevention/early intervention to complex and severe care by:

- enabling the coordination of Primary Health Tasmania funded clinical and non-clinical mental health interventions across a continuum of care (a stepped care model);
- aiming to deliver outcomes focussed, co-designed, integrated, place based mental health services along the continuum of care in areas of identified need. This approach will reduce service fragmentation through fostering provider relationships, partnerships and working towards holistic approach to mental and physical health and wellbeing;
- maintaining appropriate resourcing to support ongoing delivery of mental health services in alignment with the Australian Government funding arrangement and associated guidelines;
- undertaking ongoing review, assessment and evaluation of the performance (both outputs and outcomes) of commissioned services to inform future funding directions in line with need identified in the Mental Health Service System Integration Project; and
- supporting mechanisms to ensure the coordinated and efficient delivery of a range of provider support activity designed to improve service capacity, capability and connections to Tasmanian digital health infrastructure.

A number of activities relate to the commissioning of clinical mental health services by Primary Health Tasmania that fit within a continuum of care from early intervention to complex and severe in the primary health care setting, including:

- Low intensity mental health services
- headspace
- Youth complex and severe mental health services
- Short term psychological interventions
- Adult complex and severe mental health services
- Community-based suicide prevention interventions
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health services - social and emotional wellbeing
- Psychological services in residential aged care homes (RACHs)

This plan details activities within the above activity areas and other initiatives in the Primary Mental Health Care program during the 2025-28 period.

## Low intensity mental health services

### Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to:

- provide psychological interventions to adults with or at risk of mild mental illness in Tasmania
- increase awareness and confidence in the use of digital services.

### Description of activity

Primary Health Tasmania commissions group-based structured psychological interventions for people with or at risk of mild mental illness in Tasmania. Service modalities include face to face, online and telephone based and is available state-wide.

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-27.

- Maintain regular provider contact ensuring service agreement compliance and support to encourage digital connectivity with other health care providers.
- Provide ongoing support to providers in the collection and reporting of data, including compliance in reporting to the national Primary Mental Health Care Minimum Dataset (PMHC-MDS).
- Review and update the low intensity Tasmanian HealthPathways as required.
- Low intensity service provision will be included as a foundational activity of a mental health service commissioning continuum of care model on which the new services program will be based. The model will consider integration with alcohol and other drugs, psychosocial support and chronic conditions programs.
- Manage the transition of services to the new model with minimal disruption to service users.
- Commission an outcomes-focused, co-designed mental health service model across the mental health continuum of care.

## headspace

### Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to provide early identification and intervention strategies, and holistic care for young people aged 12 to 25 years in Tasmania who are:

- at risk of developing mental health, physical health and/or alcohol and other drug problems, or
- showing early signs of mental health, physical health and/or alcohol and other drug problems.

### Description of activity

Primary Health Tasmania commissions two providers as the lead organisations responsible for the development and implementation of the established headspace services in Hobart, Launceston and Devonport (with an associated satellite service in Burnie), and a lead organisation responsible for the establishment of a new headspace service on Hobart's eastern shore.

headspace services provide early identification and intervention strategies and holistic care for young people aged 12 to 25 years who are at risk of developing or showing early signs of mental health, physical health and/or alcohol and other drug problems.

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-28.

- Continue to commission headspace services.
- Maintain regular provider contact ensuring service agreement compliance
- Where appropriate, Primary Health Tasmania will support headspace National in its ongoing quality improvement activity through facilitating access to provider forums and other relevant meetings.
- Commission a new headspace centre lead agency and service on Hobart's eastern shore.
- Implement referral pathways between headspace lead agencies and lead agency establishing early psychosis youth service (EPYS).
- Review and update the child and youth mental health services Tasmanian HealthPathways as required.

## Youth severe and complex mental health services

### Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to:

- increase access to mental health services for young people (aged 12 to 25 years) with, or at risk of, severe and complex mental illness in Tasmania
- improve access to psychosocial support services across Tasmania.

### Description of activity

Primary Health Tasmania commissions two providers to deliver assertive outreach mental health clinical case management and psychological services to young people aged 12 to 25 years with or at risk of severe and complex mental illness. The service includes assessment and diagnostic clarification, assistance to identify and access necessary services, and educational support to other service providers and will be available statewide.

Youth enhanced mental health service provision will be considered as part of broader mental health service work to investigate commissioning of outcomes focused, co-designed, place based mental health services along the continuum of care in areas of identified need which considers integration with the Commonwealth Psychosocial Support, Alcohol and other Drugs (AOD), and management of chronic conditions programs.

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-26.

- Continue to commission youth severe and complex mental health services.
- Maintain regular provider contact ensuring service agreement compliance.
- Provide ongoing support to provider in the collection and reporting of data, including compliance in reporting to the national Primary Mental Health Care Minimum Dataset (PMHC-MDS).

- Undertake further work to determine the service model requirements to ensure that youth enhanced services are available to underserved groups in Tasmania as part of the continuum of care.
- Review and update the Child and Youth Mental Health Services Tasmanian HealthPathways as required.

## Short term psychological interventions

### Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to provide short-term psychological interventions to people with mild to moderate mental health conditions, or to people who have attempted, or are at risk of suicide across Tasmania.

### Description of activity

In order to ensure equitable access state-wide, including hard to reach populations, the services are designed to offer greater flexibility than the Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and General Practitioners initiative, particularly for parents/carers of young people and a range of modalities including face to face individual consultations, group therapies, and telehealth services.

Short term psychological intervention service provision will be considered as part of broader mental health service work to investigate commissioning of outcomes focused, co-designed, place based mental health service along the continuum of care in areas of identified need which considers integration with the Commonwealth Psychosocial Support, Alcohol and other Drugs (AOD), and management of chronic conditions programs.

Primary Health Tasmania commissions three providers to deliver short-term psychological interventions across Tasmania.

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-26.

- Continue to commission short-term psychological interventions.
- Maintain regular provider contact ensuring service agreement compliance.
- Provide ongoing support to provider in the collection and reporting of data, including compliance in reporting to the national Primary Mental Health Care Minimum Dataset (PMHC-MDS).
- Review and update the Short-term Psychological Interventions Tasmanian HealthPathways as required.

## Adult severe and complex mental health services

### Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to:

- provide services to adults with complex and severe mental illness who are being managed in a primary care setting across Tasmania
- improve access to psychosocial support services across Tasmania.

## Description of activity

Primary Health Tasmania commissions three providers to deliver evidence-based mental health nursing services to adults with complex and severe mental illness in a primary care setting that complement and enhance existing General Practice, psychiatrist and allied mental health professional services available through the Medicare Benefits Scheme. Activity includes case conferencing and coordination of services, establishing and maintaining links with state health services and contributing to the planning and care management of patients. Service is available statewide.

Adult complex mental health service provision will be considered as part of broader mental health service work to investigate commissioning of outcomes focused, co-designed, place based mental health service along the continuum of care in areas of identified need which considers integration with the Commonwealth Psychosocial Support, Alcohol and other Drugs (AOD), and management of chronic conditions programs.

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-26.

- Continue to commission adult severe and complex mental health services.
- Maintain regular provider contact ensuring service agreement compliance.
- Provide ongoing support to provider in the collection and reporting of data, including compliance in reporting to the national Primary Mental Health Care Minimum Dataset (PMHC-MDS).
- Investigate opportunities for innovative staffing models incorporating alternative, appropriately qualified workforce to support mental health nurse clinical service provision.
- Investigate referral pathways to allow easier transition of patients in and out of the program.
- Review and update the Adult Severe and Complex Mental Health Services Tasmanian HealthPathways as required.

## Community based suicide prevention

### Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to promote help-seeking behaviours, promote local responses to suicide within communities, facilitate better networks between service providers and communities, and contribute to the objectives of the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2023-27.

### Description of activity

Primary Health Tasmania commissions three providers to provide effective and timely early intervention policies and programs that reduce the incidence of suicide and promote help seeking avenues for individuals, families and communities experiencing mental health and welfare issues in rural and remote areas of Tasmania.

The Tasmania Suicide Prevention Strategy and future commitments through the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan will inform the future collaborative commissioning of the community-based suicide prevention activity.

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-26.

- Continue to commission community based suicide prevention interventions in line with the recommendations from the service review.

- Identify suicide prevention specific opportunities for the implementation of a collaborative commissioning approach.
- Maintain regular provider contact ensuring service agreement compliance.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health services

### Aim of activity

This activity aims to enhance and better integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health services at a local level facilitating a joined-up approach with other closely connected services including social and emotional wellbeing, suicide prevention and alcohol and other drug services.

This activity includes a focus on the four key Closing the Gap reform areas:

- Shared decision making
- Building the community-controlled sector
- Improving mainstream institutions
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led data

### Description of activity

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-26.

- Continue to commission social and emotional wellbeing programs in local communities
  - continue to support the integration of social and emotional wellbeing programs with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and mainstream specialised mental health programs
  - continue to promote the Deadly Choices program in collaboration with commissioned providers, as an important strategy in building an early intervention approach to health and wellbeing.
- Co-design continuous quality improvement program
  - continue to support capacity for Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Organisations to drive and inform evidence-based service development to address identified gaps and deliver local priorities
  - continue to support capacity for Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Organisations to inform and participate in key reform indicatives including Closing the Gap and state initiatives such as the implementation of the Re-think mental health statewide plan
  - continue to engage with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, Aboriginal communities and key partners to develop short, medium and long-term options to address the identified and emerging mental health priorities for Aboriginal communities.
- Maintain regular provider contact ensuring service agreement compliance and provide ongoing support to provider in the collection and reporting of data, including compliance in reporting.
- Improve culturally appropriate mainstream primary mental health care
  - facilitate access to training focused on trauma-informed care and culturally appropriate care for primary health care providers

- review and update the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health Services Tasmanian HealthPathways as required.

## Mental health service system integration

### Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to work in partnership with the Tasmanian Department of Health, the Tasmanian Health Service, the Mental Health Council of Tasmania and other relevant stakeholders to:

- embed integration of mental health and suicide prevention services and pathways for people with or at risk of mental illness or suicide through a whole of system approach
- drive and inform evidence-based service development to address identified gaps and deliver regional priorities
- strengthen engagement and collaboration with the Tasmanian Department of Health and Tasmanian Health Service to support shared implementation of priority actions identified in the Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
- increase awareness and uptake of the Initial Assessment and Referral tool by Tasmanian clinicians to standardise initial assessment and guide decisions for appropriate referral of people presenting with mental health conditions across the mental health sector
- develop, implement and maintain tools and resources that enable integration and coordination of mental health (and other health services) in Tasmania (e.g. a single mental health triage and assessment approach, system navigation and client data management tools, co-commissioning processes, etc.).

### Description of activity

Facilitated through the unique benefits and opportunities afforded by a single Primary Health Network boundary and a single state-wide health system, Primary Health Tasmania, the Tasmanian Department of Health, the Tasmanian Health Service, the Mental Health Council of Tasmania, the National Disability Insurance Agency and representatives of Tasmanian consumer and carer networks will work together to deliver an integrated mental health system for all Tasmanians.

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-26.

- Continue to implement activity in Rethink 2020 and the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2023-27 Implementation Plans.
- Develop a Strategic Commissioning Framework with the Department of Health, Tasmania.
- Implement the Central Intake and Referral Service (CIRS) in Tasmania.
- Support peak bodies (Mental Health Council of Tasmania, Flourish and Mental Health Families and Friends) to engage in and lead sector reform with their members.
- Maintain regular contact with peak bodies.
- Ongoing liaison and collaboration with key stakeholders.
- Ongoing work to identify and implement contemporary evidence-based priority population policy frameworks suitable for implementation into Primary Health Tasmania's commissioned mental health services.

- Establish a centralised Hub for a Lived Experience workforce to contribute to the ongoing mental health, suicide prevention and AOD business and reform program initiatives.

## **Psychological treatment services for people with mental illness living in residential aged care homes (RACHs)**

### **Aim of activity**

The aim of this activity is to:

- improve access to appropriate psychological therapies for RACH residents with mild to moderate mental illness
- increase innovative and adaptive services specifically designed to meet the needs of older people which complement personal care and accommodation services by RACHs, dementia services and broader physical health and social support
- increase RACH workforce capability to identify, assess and management residents with mild to moderate mental illness.

### **Description of activity**

Psychological services to residents of aged care facilities will be considered as part of broader mental health service work to investigate commissioning of outcomes focused, co-designed, place based mental health service along the continuum of care in areas of identified need which considers integration with the Commonwealth Psychosocial Support, Alcohol and other Drugs (AOD), and management of chronic conditions programs.

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2023-26.

- Continue to commission the existing provider to deliver in reach psychological services to residents within residential aged care homes in line with other mental health commissioned services.
- Undertake a service review to ensure alignment with broader mental health commissioning priorities and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Liaison with residential aged care providers and peak bodies to further understand the needs of residents in residential aged care homes with mild to moderate mental illness as part of the wider aged care work.
- Undertake a review of the service provision to inform future service delivery.

# Training for GPs in mental health

## Aim of activity

This activity aims to upskill the Tasmanian GP workforce, improving capability to address growing prevalence of mental illness as a primary presentation of patients being treated by GPs in their communities.

## Description of activity

GPs are the most common primary point of presentation for people seeking to address mental illness, yet GPs regularly raise concerns about a lack of training in being able to respond to mental ill health and a lack of understanding of the services available for on-referral of patients.

This activity is to deliver specialised training and supporting resources to enhance GPs' knowledge and skills, enabling them to work effectively and safely refer identified patients to appropriate specialist, allied mental health professionals, and psychosocial support service.

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-26.

- Continue to deliver training to GPs as identified
- Promote training events through available media
- Review outcomes of events and emerging mental health priorities to revise training calendar for the next financial year.

# Early psychosis youth service (EPYS)

## Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to:

- reduce the incidence and severity of psychosis within young people (12 to 25 years) through prevention, early detection and coordinated care delivery
- increase access to specialist support for young people (aged 12 to 25 years) who are experiencing, or at an increased risk of developing psychosis.

## Description of activity

The Australian Government funds the development and implementation of an early psychosis program for young people aged 12 to 25 years in Tasmania.

Primary Health Tasmania funds EACH as the lead agency for the establishment of the early psychosis youth service in Tasmania, based on the Early Psychosis Prevention and Intervention Centre (EPPIC) model.

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-26.

- Work with EACH, Orygen and headspace National to develop a service model that maintains fidelity with the EPPIC model, incorporates an integrated workforce approach, and outlines a statewide approach to service delivery.
- Secure suitable premises and complete required fit out to meet the model requirements in partnership with EACH, Orygen and headspace National.
- Support lead agency in the establishment phase of the service, including:

- implementation of interim service options during complex and extended establishment phase of the service program,
- recruitment and development of appropriate clinical governance and safety and quality documentation,
- review of local service mapping and develop local referral pathways.
- Establish an Expert Reference Group to support community engagement, consultation and development of service specifications.
- Establish interagency steering group with the Tasmanian Department of Health, Tasmanian Health Service, national peak bodies and Primary Health Tasmania to oversee development and implementation of EPYS within the broader sector reform activity.
- Maintain regular provider contact and provide ongoing support to providers in the collection and reporting of data, including compliance in reporting to the hAPI to meeting requirements of headspace and Orygen model fidelity.
- Finalise basic suite of information, services and referral pathways and formalise partnerships with relevant in-reach services.
- Support the integration and ongoing delivery of the EPYS in Tasmania, considering the intersection with new and existing youth mental health services.

## Targeted regional initiatives for suicide prevention

### Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to:

- enable and promote regional approaches to suicide prevention including community-based activities to ensure appropriate follow up and support arrangements are in place for individuals after a suicide attempt and for people at high risk of suicide
- improve care coordination and service pathways for people at risk or bereaved by suicide
- build the capacity and capability of local workforces to respond to suicide and suicidal distress, linking people with appropriate supports and services
- utilise a regional suicide prevention coordinator to engage and lead activities, including supporting the Culture Care Connect Program.

### Description of activity

In November 2022, the Tasmanian State Government released the *Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2023-27* which includes commitments to implementing evidence-based and lived-experience informed actions focusing on preventing the onset of suicidal behaviour and enabling compassionate and connected supports to be available for those who need them.

Primary Health Tasmania partners with the Department of Health, Tasmania to co-develop and implement community and system-based approaches to suicide prevention.

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-26.

- Support joint Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2023-27 Implementation Plan activities with the Department of Health, Tasmania.
- Participate in state-wide and regional governance and working groups to progress whole-of-government suicide prevention policy, funding, implementation, evaluation and reporting.

- Maintain ongoing engagement with Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Network Committee and other suicide prevention sector stakeholders.
- Participate in the Primary Health Networks Community of Practice for suicide prevention.
- Continue to support planning and implementation of improved universal aftercare services, including extended and improved referral pathways.
- Support Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Organisations responsible for delivering the Culture Care Connect Program.
- Deliver education and training to strengthen capability across the Tasmanian health and suicide prevention workforce.
- Undertake ongoing review, assessment and evaluation of the performance of commissioned services to inform future funding directions in line with the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2023 - 27 Implementation Plan.

## Community response to eliminating suicide

### Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to work with Kentish Council to provide local community education under the Community Owned Response to Eliminating Suicide (CORES) Program in Tasmania.

### Description of activity

The activities outlined below are planned to be implemented during 2025-26.

- Commission Kentish Regional Clinic to deliver CORES suicide prevention training sessions and selfcare and mental health wellbeing workshops to Tasmanian communities.
- The training workshops are designed to provide individuals (aged 15 years+) and communities with essential skills and resources to identify and respond to a person at risk of suicide, including:
  - having safe and supportive conversations about suicide,
  - recognising warning signs and promoting help-seeking,
  - identifying and promoting protective factors and supporting a person at-risk to access appropriate services,
  - undertaking safety planning and developing personalised self-care strategies.
- Provide participants with practical materials such as helpline information, local resource guides, prompt cards summarising key content, safety planning tools, and a personal self-care plan.
- Undertake review of the commissioned services' performance in line with the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy 2023 - 27 Implementation Plan and Targeted Regional Initiatives for Suicide Prevention activities.

## Intake and assessment phone service

### Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to establish and operate an intake and assessment phone service as an entry point for accessing mental health services.

### Description of activity

Primary Health Tasmania partners with the Department of Health, Tasmania to co-design and implement the Central Intake and Referral Service (CIRS), ensuring compliance and integration with the national Head to Health intake and assessment phone service requirements.

## Mental health continuum of care

### Aim of activity

The aim of this activity is to enhance the integration and effectiveness of mental health services across Tasmania by adopting a phased, co-designed commissioning approach that is responsive to the evolving needs of the community and aligned with national mental health reform objectives.

This activity provides overarching coordination across a range of Primary Health Tasmania commissioned clinical mental health services within a continuum of care from early intervention through to complex and severe in the primary health care setting.

These currently include:

- Low intensity mental health services
- headspace
- Youth complex and severe mental health services
- Short term psychological interventions
- Adult complex and severe mental health services
- Community-based suicide prevention interventions
- Aboriginal mental health services - social and emotional wellbeing
- Psychological services in residential aged care homes.

### Description of activity

The 2025-27 activities for the Mental Health Continuum of Care project focus on strengthening and streamlining mental health service provision across Tasmania. This will be achieved through a series of strategic actions:

- Conduct comprehensive market analysis to determine the current landscape of mental health service provision.
- Engage stakeholders through consultation workshops to gather insights that inform the design of the new service model.
- Develop and finalise the mental health service commissioning model.
- Consider improved integration with psychosocial support, AOD, and chronic conditions management programs in future phases of the service model.

- Provide ongoing support to providers in the collection and reporting of data, ensuring compliance with the national Primary Mental Health Care Minimum Dataset (PMHC-MDS).
- Develop a mental health service commissioning model that will underpin the new services and guide the transition of existing providers towards the continuum of care approach.
- Manage the transition of services to the new model with minimal disruption to service users.
- Commission an outcomes-focused, co-designed mental health service model across the continuum of care.