

Mothers with Mental Illness (Mums and Kids Matter)



Health

Shifting the focus to community-based care, enhancing community networks and supports, and developing a more responsive system are important parts of the NSW Government Mental Health Reform addressed by the Mums and Kids Matter program.

Mums and Kids Matter delivers a statewide service to mothers experiencing severe and complex mental illness who are current clients of public mental health services and would benefit from the services provided by the program in order to remain able to care for their young child/children (0-5 years) in the community.

Wesley Mission delivers the Mums and Kids Matter program in partnership with the NSW Ministry of Health.

Mums and Kids Matter provides community-based specialist short-term non-acute residential mental health and tertiary parenting care; in-home or residential care accommodation support packages; and brokerage to access tertiary level support in specialist facilities.

The program delivers essential evidence-informed interventions to treat complex mental health problems in mothers and manage the symptoms that may adversely impact mother-infant and family functioning. It links mothers to a range of community based local supports according to each mother's particular needs and preferences. The program is an essential component of the NSW Perinatal and Infant Mental Health service system.

Mums and Kids Matter is underpinned by a belief that retaining intact families is beneficial for the child, for the mother/parents, for the immediate family and for the community.

An external evaluation of Mums and Kids Matter conducted in 2016 found that the program fills an important gap in mental health services for mothers and children, delivering family-focused interventions to improve the health and wellbeing of participating mothers through individually tailored care that improves parenting and family functioning and reduces social vulnerabilities such as homelessness.

Mums and Kids Matter commenced in May 2014 under the National Partnership Agreement Supporting Mental Health Reform. Commonwealth funding for the program concluded in June 2016.

NSW funding under the Mental Health Reform over three years, 2016-17 to 2018-19, allowed the program to be maintained and the Mums and Kids Matter contract with Wesley to be extended to June 2019.

To learn more about mental health care reform in NSW visit

www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/reform

