

Whole Family Teams (WFT)



Health

The expansion of the Whole Family Team clinical service is an important part of the NSW Government Mental Health Reform to increase specialist clinical mental health and drug and alcohol services delivered in the community.

Whole Family Teams were established in 2009 under the *Keep Them Safe* initiative.

The original teams are located in Illawarra Shoalhaven, Northern NSW, Hunter New England and Central Coast local health districts.

Whole Family Teams deliver specialist in-home and community based interventions for children and families with complex mental health and drug and alcohol issues where one or more children have a substantiated risk of significant harm report.

Interventions are delivered across a period of approximately 6-8 months. Collaborative partnerships and joint working between Family and Community Services and NSW Health were found to be essential to the success of the model.

An independent evaluation found that completion of the program led to clinically significant improvements in the parents' mental health; improved parental drug and alcohol outcomes; significant improvements in family functioning (including parenting, family relationships and child wellbeing); and significant improvements in child safety with a substantial reduction in the number of children being re-reported to Family and Community Services.

The Whole Family Team enhancement provides an additional three community based teams located in Western Sydney, Nepean Blue Mountains and South Western Sydney.

Each Whole Family Team delivers specialist mental health, drug and alcohol, and tertiary parenting interventions to approximately 48 families in their home per year. The enhancement will mean that approximately 144 additional families will receive Whole Family Team specialist clinical interventions each year.

To learn more about mental health care reform in NSW visit

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

