

Increasing specialist clinical mental health services in the community



Community and mental health services will be expanded to ensure flexible and responsive support services can be provided for people with mental illness in community settings.

Evidence shows that people with mental illness can live fulfilling lives in the community when they are provided with care that meets their needs.

People with severe and complex mental illness who receive clinical mental health services in the community will receive up to 15 per cent more hours of specialist clinical support. Specialist mental health clinical services provide continuing care in the community. These services assess people and their families following referral by family, friends or other services and agencies such as emergency departments, GPs, schools, nursing homes and justice services.

The number of Whole Family Teams will be enhanced with three additional teams to be established.

Whole of Family Teams provide specialist mental health, drug and alcohol and parenting interventions in the home for families where parental drug and alcohol and/or mental health problems exist and where there has been a substantiated risk of significant harm reported. Specialist interventions delivered in the home can result in improvements in psychological distress, reductions in tobacco and alcohol consumption, and improvements in family functioning.

Access to crisis and triage will be enhanced in regional NSW. A new 24/7 mental health resource hub will be established with mental health professionals to support health professionals in northern NSW. The hub will offer rapid and safe mental health assessment and consultation support,

delivered remotely through video conferencing technology. This initiative will enhance the skills of regional staff and provide specialist advice in regional areas where it is not currently available.

Specialist perinatal and infant mental health (PIMH) services will be enhanced to support 200 more (to a total of 800) mothers with severe and complex mental illness each year. Specialist PIMH services allow mothers to be cared for in the community with their children and families, where possible. This avoids the need for hospitalisation and reduces their length of stay.

Maintaining support for young people following release from custody. Young people with mental health and/or drug and alcohol issues need integrated, ongoing care following release from custody to successfully reintegrate into the community. Early intervention through specialist community mental health services can help prevent deterioration in health, inevitable hospital admissions, and poor social outcomes, such as family and relationship breakdowns, homelessness and unemployment.

Support will be continued to ensure a seamless transition of care across court, juvenile centres and the community. This includes linking with Aboriginal Community Controlled Services as well as Aboriginal Medical and Legal Services to ensure a focus on young Aboriginal people.