

STEPPED CARE FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

What is stepped care?

Stepped care is an evidence-based approach to the delivery of mental health services.

It is characterised by a hierarchy of interventions, ranging from the least to the most intensive, matched to an individual's needs.

The stepped care approach gives clients the ability to step-up and/or step-down to different levels of care throughout their recovery journey.

It means the care your patients receive will be tailored to their needs.

How does stepped care work?

Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN operates a central intake and referral line specifically for general practitioners to call and refer in their patients.

Depending on their needs, patients/clients are then connected with an appropriate mental health service provider who has been commissioned by the PHN to deliver treatment services.

The PHN's online clinical decision tool, HealthPathways, also contains all the necessary information to assist you in determining eligibility and referral pathways. Health professionals can access HealthPathways from the PHN website.



HealthPathways lists the eligibility criteria and contact information for your region.



The PHN runs a central intake and referral line for GPs to direct patients to the right service for their needs.

Phone: 1300 747 724

Fax: 1300 787 494



Low intensity clients can self-refer to services via New Access on 1300 224 636

Want to know more? We're here to help.

To find out more, contact your local practice support officer or visit www.ourphn.org.au/mental-health

What is stepped care?

What are the 'steps' in stepped care?

A stepped care approach to mental health services offers a range of tiers or 'steps' of service to meet the diverse needs of clients

Stream 1: Low-intensity psychological services

- Aimed at people over 16 with, or at risk of developing, mild mental illness.
- Offers face to face or phone sessions with a vocationally qualified mental health worker.
- If a person's severity of illness increases, the GP can review client needs to potentially step up more intense supports.

Stream 2: Child and youth primary mental health care services

- Delivers youth-specific care coordination and mental health services for people under 25 years.
- Services are provided by qualified mental health professionals with experience and accreditation in working with children and youth. These may include clinical psychologist, mental health nurse, psychiatrist, social worker, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing workers.
- Care coordination may involve working in partnership with primary and acute care providers, family, schools, employers and other agencies to improve integration of services with the aim of improving clinical outcomes.

Stream 3: Psychological therapies for underserved groups

- Provides psychological therapies for individuals who may not otherwise be able to access services.
- Services are provided by qualified mental health professionals (including clinical psychologist, GP, mental health nurse, psychiatrist, or

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing workers).

Stream 4: Primary mental health care services for people with severe mental illness

- Provides clinical care coordination for people with a diagnosed mental health illness that is ongoing, and significantly impacts their social, personal, and work life.
- Care coordination is provided by a mental health nurse credentialed with the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses or equivalent, and may involve consulting with primary and acute care agencies to improve integration of services with the aim of improving clinical outcomes.

Stream 5: Suicide prevention aftercare service

- Supports continuity of care by providing outreach and follow-up to individuals directly after a suicide attempt. The focus is on connecting people to existing health, clinical and community-based support.
- Referral pathway for this service will most often be acute care or emergency departments.

Stream 6: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health services

- The PHN recognises the importance of providing identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders with culturally appropriate care coordination provided by Indigenous mental health professionals.
- Services will address the needs of clients with different care requirements: from low-care to high-care.
- Care coordination may involve working in partnership with primary and acute care providers, emergency services, family, community and other agencies to improve integration of services with the aim of improving clinical outcomes.

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