

In response to increased Commonwealth funding for PHNs to commission Mental Health Services for Older Australians, including people living in Residential Aged Care Facilities, we have developed an Aged Care Mental Health Strategy 2020 -2023. The Strategy was developed to complement existing Mental Health services, while addressing the needs and gaps identified through the Aged Care Mental Health Needs Assessment to implement a suite of services within a stepped care framework that were appropriate for older people. Broad evidence-based interventions will complement existing services to holistically address the mental health and wellbeing of older people, while also supporting workforce capacity.

The stages implementation will involve:

- Three streams of psychological treatment and support will be available to deliver mild to low interventions. The interventions will begin in the pilot region and be reviewed for potential expansion after the pilot; and
- Capacity building component.

Research and evaluation of Aged Care mental health clinical interventions will occur between 2021 and 2023. The outcome of the evaluation will:

- Guide formal monitoring, review and evaluation;
- Shape commissioning activities; and
- Support future mental health service designs in primary care setting.

Existing psychological services for residents in Aged Care will continue as part of the strategy and be included in the evaluation of clinical interventions.

Additional service streams and capacity building activities to be undertaken are detailed in the following tables.

CLINICAL INTERVENTIONS

	ACTIVITY	PILOT REGION	TIMEFRAME	APPROACH
Innovation Initiatives	Digital Story Telling	Hunter, New England, Central Coast	2020-2023	Direct Procurement
	Psychoeducation with Family	Hunter, New England, Central Coast	2020 -2023	Direct Procurement
	Animal Assisted Therapy	Hunter, New England	2021 -2023	Request for Proposal
	Music as Therapy	New England, Central Coast	2021 -2023	Direct Procurement
	Older Persons Peer Support Program	Hunter, New England	2021 -2023	Direct Procurement
	Localise Bereavement Centre	Hunter, Central Coast	2021 -2023	Request for Proposal
	Research and evaluation of alternate interventions	Hunter, New England, Central Coast	2021-2023	Request for Proposal

CAPACITY BUILDING

	ACTIVITY	REGION	TIMEFRAME	APPROACH
	ACON Aged Care Inclusive Practice	Hunter, New England, Central Coast	2021-2022	Direct Procurement
Scholarships	Graduate Certificate in Consumer & Community Engagement	Hunter, New England, Central Coast	2021-2022	Direct Procurement
	Graduate Certificate in Counselling and Interventions	Hunter, New England, Central Coast	2021-2022	Direct Procurement
	Certificate IV in Peer Work	Hunter, New England, Central Coast	2021-2022	Direct Procurement
	Certificate IV in Leisure & Health	Hunter, New England, Central Coast	2022-2022	Direct Procurement
	Partnerships with Training Institutes/Organisations	Hunter, New England, Central Coast	2022-2023	N/A