Welcome to the twelfth Information Bulletin about the Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol (MHDA) Services Transformation project.

We are currently working on the planning necessary to identify the detail of the future service mix and the range of community services required to best meet the District’s population needs and align with contemporary practice. To do this, the Implementation Steering Committee identified seven key projects, each with a project lead and project reference group. The project leads come together with Meg Simpson, the Project Manager, to form the Services Transformation Project Team.

This information Bulletin focuses on: Project 4 Community service design for infants, children and adolescents with mental health challenges.

The Project Reference Group consists of members who have a diverse range of skills, expertise and knowledge and an understanding of the challenges encountered in the delivery of MHDA services in rural and remote communities.

Project Reference Group 4:
Project leads - Jolene Kallus Acting Team Leader ICYF Dubbo and Region and Michelle Schmich
Team Leader ICYF Orange

- Dr Jarret Johnston – Senior Staff Specialist Psychiatrist and Steering Committee Representative
- Dr Susan Blinkhorn Senior Staff Specialist Psychiatrist, Clinical Director Wollemi Unit
- Laurin Allen A/CNC CMAHS Inpatient Unit
- Christina Hunt Perinatal & Infant MH Coordinato
- Karen Kirkwood HEO Pine Lodge YD Program
- Anita Willey Social Worker CAMHS
- Kelly LEONARD Family & Carer MH Program
- Emily Smith Clinical Leader ICYF Mental Health
- Natalie Clarke Occupational therapist CAMHS Inpatient Unit

The purpose of the project is “to determine the range and volume of community-based infant, child and adolescent services required in Western NSW over the next 2-5 years – within a contemporary model of care”. This project relates specifically to Recommendation 4 of the Mental Health Review: that the LHD “enhances and strengthens the current hub and spoke approach as its model for the delivery of community services, in order to adequately meet the needs of those population groups perceived as currently being underserviced – infants children and youth and to ensure there are adequate wrap-around services for young people involved with multiple agencies”.

This project is aimed at improving access to community services and improved outcomes for infants, children and adolescents with mental health challenges. That is community services covering 0-18 year olds.
The project reference group has been meeting regularly and developing the draft project plan. The plan outlines the steps needed in terms of gathering data and evidence, in order to be able to make recommendations on the future service model. This model needs to enhance and strengthen the current hub and spoke approach for the delivery of community services for infants, children and adolescents with mental health challenges over the next 2-5 years.

This includes:
- A stocktake of the current level, spread and type of community mental health services available for infants, children and adolescents to the age of 18 years across the Health District
- Obtain data from other parts of the state and within Australia and overseas for comparison
- Estimate the level of demand for community-based infant and adolescent services
- Develop a model for providing outreach services to low population, rural and remote areas that do not have a dedicated ICAMHS team based in the local town
- Develop a model of collaborative service delivery for adolescent with Multi-Agency involvement
- The project group is also working closely with the other MHDA Service Transformation projects to ensure that we work towards models of care that contribute to closing the Aboriginal Health gap and improving the MHDA consumer journey.

This is an exciting project for ICYF Community Mental Health Services across the District. It allows us to look to the future and develop a contemporary model of care that enhances and strengthens the current community services.

If you have any questions about the project or any of the others or want to provide input, please contact us.

Next Information Bulletin: Service Design for adults and older people with mental health conditions and high support needs.

We welcome your input either through the Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol Review email address: WNSWLHD-MHReview@health.nsw.gov.au
Or by contacting Meg Simpson, the Mental Health, Drug & Alcohol Review Project Manager: Meg.Simpson@health.nsw.gov.au

More Information
Click here for Frequently Asked Questions regarding the purpose and key findings of the Review. Further feedback and questions can be emailed to WNSWLHD-MHReview@health.nsw.gov.au. These emails will be answered on a regular basis.
You can also view the “Rising to the Challenge: Mental Health Services Review video presentation by clicking here (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gmJoKZnBYM).