



**The Hon Greg Hunt MP**  
**Minister for Health and Aged Care**

**Melissa McIntosh MP**  
**Federal Member for Lindsay**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

25 June 2021

**PENRITH'S HEAD TO HEALTH CENTRE  
TAKES NEXT STEP TO DECEMBER OPENING**

The Federal Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP, the Federal Member for Lindsay, Melissa McIntosh MP and Wentworth Healthcare CEO, Lizz Reay are pleased to announce that Neami National will operate Penrith's Adult Mental Health Centre, now called Head to Health, which will open in December 2021.

The centre is one of eight being trialled across the country over the next five years, with one located in each state and territory. The Primary Health Network (PHN) has been tasked with delivering the centres which will provide walk-in support, without the need of a prior appointment, to individuals experiencing distress or crisis.

Federal Member for Lindsay, Melissa McIntosh said the mental health and wellbeing of our community is a key priority for her and the Morrison Government.

"One of my first actions as the Federal Member for Lindsay was forming the Lindsay Healthy Active Living Network, and inviting the Minister for Health to meet with local people to discuss the needs of our community now, and into the future," Ms McIntosh said.

"People in Lindsay deserve the help, support and care when they need it most. That's why I committed over \$14 million for this important local mental health service.

"This is an important milestone in the delivery of what will become a cornerstone of the health and wellbeing of our community. The centre will cater for the specific needs of our community to ensure local people get the best outcomes."

Minister for Health and Aged Care, the Hon. Greg Hunt MP, welcomed the news and said he looked forward to continuing to improve mental health services in Western Sydney.

"As part of the 2021-22 Budget, the Morrison Government invested a record \$2.3 billion in the national Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan to lead landmark reform in mental health support and treatment for Australians in need," Minister Hunt said.

“Head to Health centres form part of our five key pillars to improve mental health outcomes and I’m delighted that this service will be open soon to the Lindsay community.

“Melissa has been a tireless advocate for her community of Lindsay in Canberra and I am proud that the Penrith Head to Health clinic will be open by the end of the year.

“The Morrison Government is committed to working towards zero suicides and transforming the mental health system to ensure that All Australians can access the right care and essential services whenever and wherever they need.”

Wentworth Healthcare, the provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains PHN, is responsible for delivering the Head to Health concept in Penrith and is excited to be partnering with Neami to establish and operate the centre. Neami National was selected after a rigorous open tender process which included local clinicians and community members as part of the assessment panel.

Wentworth Healthcare CEO, Lizz Reay said, “in our region, it is estimated that 17 per cent of people are experiencing high or very high psychological distress, and these numbers were reported before the effects of bushfires, COVID-19 and floods.”

“Neami National has over 35 years of experience in delivering programs that have improved the mental health and wellbeing of communities across Australia. We look forward to utilising our combined knowledge in the co-design of this vital service, to ensure it meets the needs of our local community,” Ms Reay said.

“Our intention is that this centre will be a safe, friendly and welcoming hub for individuals experiencing emotional or psychological distress and for the loved ones and carers who support them. Insights from people in our region with lived experience, their carers and families, will be key to the design of this centre.”

Neami National CEO, Tom Dalton, said, “Neami National has deep associations in Penrith and surrounds and will continue our partnering with local organisations and the community to co-design, implement and deliver a welcoming, safe and inclusive space for people seeking mental health support.

“We learn when we have a deep engagement with the local community which feeds into better services for people,” Mr Dalton said.

“Working closely with our partners, we will bring an evidence-based recovery approach and a lived experience emphasis to provide a ‘no wrong door’ way to support people with mental health concerns, their families and carers.

“We are excited to be partnering to bring this much needed service to Penrith and acknowledge the Federal Government’s commitment to providing these safe and inclusive services for our communities.”

Both Wentworth Healthcare and Neami National believe that community and health industry consultation is crucial to the design of the centre. You can register your interest in being involved in the consultation process at [www.nbmphn.com.au/HeadtoHealth](http://www.nbmphn.com.au/HeadtoHealth).

**ENDS**

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