

13 August 2021

Penrith locals encouraged to take part in Head to Health co-design

People from the Hawkesbury, including those with a lived experience of mental health challenges, are invited to help design a new adult mental health service that will open in the Penrith area in December this year.

The Penrith Head to Health community mental health service will be "co-designed" to develop solutions that work for a diverse mix of people, including those with lived experience and professionals who work in the sector.

Neami National has partnered with Wentworth Healthcare, the provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network to design and open the centre, one of eight nation-wide funded by Federal Government.

Neami National NSW State Manager Peter Gianfrancesco said Penrith Head to Health would provide mental health services, including crisis support, without the need for an appointment.

Mr Gianfrancesco said Neami and Wentworth Healthcare will be holding co-design sessions over the next six months and invited people with a lived experience of recovery, carers and family, mental health professionals, support services and first responders to take part.

"The sessions are designed to find out what is needed to provide a positive experience at the centre and what it should feel like when someone accesses the service," Mr Gianfrancesco said.

"We also want to find out how best to integrate with existing services, and what makes for the right service at the right time."

Lizz Reay, CEO of Wentworth Healthcare 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."

Mr Gianfrancesco said it was incredibly important to co-design Head to Health, and as a result, the Neami and Wentworth Healthcare were seeking ongoing input from people with lived experience and the community as a whole.

He said both organisations were working closely with clinical professionals in the area with local community members and health professionals able to [register their interest](#) in taking part in future sessions.

The Penrith Head to Health centre will support the mental health and wellbeing of the community by providing and connecting people to the right care when and where it is needed with the aim of:

- Providing adults with timely access to short-term care to meet their immediate mental health needs;



- Actively facilitating access to services for adults that meets their mental health needs; and,
- Establishing a welcoming hub that provides information, navigation and referral to anyone seeking mental health support for themselves or others.

Using a combination of recovery-based, peer-led and clinical support, Penrith Head to Health will help to reduce distress for people in crisis. Staff will work collaboratively with people to identify their needs, provide immediate support and help connect with local services for the future.

The Penrith Head to Health centre is due to open late in December 2021.

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