



CEO UPDATE

29 JULY 2020

Important Information Regarding our SOS Service

Our Seek out Support (SOS) Psychological Therapy Service provides patients with low-to-moderate risk of suicide access to unlimited clinical support for up to two months. We are currently experiencing excess demand for this service which is impacting service delivery.

The SOS Service is not a crisis intervention service and is not appropriate for people at high risk of suicide, self-harm, or who need immediate intervention. The service is also not appropriate for the management of patients with ongoing, chronic or long lasting mental health disorders.

SOS Referral Allocation Time-frames

At current rates of demand, we are experiencing difficulties sourcing allied health professionals who are able to accept new SOS referrals on the same day. We are also experiencing difficulties sourcing allied health professionals who are in a position to provide the first appointment within 72 hours of accepting the referral. As a result, at the moment we are unable to guarantee this time-frame will be met by the allied health provider.

To assist us in managing this demand, we are asking GP referrers to carefully assess patients and consider other suitable care options to ensure the service is limited to eligible patients. Please consider the SOS Eligibility Criteria below.

All Hours Suicide Support Line

GPs are reminded that they can utilise the [All Hours Suicide Support Line](#) on **1800 859 585** to ensure individuals in the process of being linked to an AHP (or those who are waiting for an appointment) have access to support they need. The [All Hours Suicide Support Line](#) provides patients with low-to-moderate risk of suicide with support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, ensuring patients have access to professional counselling support around the clock.

SOS Eligibility Criteria

Who is eligible?

- Adolescents from 14 years and adults who have expressed thoughts of suicide to their GP, family, friends or carers.
- Individuals who have been discharged from hospital following attempted suicide.
- Family or friends considered at risk in the aftermath of a suicide.

High risk patients should be referred to appropriate Crisis Support Services, while patients with ongoing mental health issues should be referred to [other appropriate services](#).

Crisis Support Services

Mental Health Access Line: 1800 011 511

The Mental Health Access Line is a 24-hour mental health connection and referral services that is staffed by mental health professionals.

On the Line Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

The Suicide Call Back Service is a national service that provides professional 24-hour telephone and online counselling to people who are affected by suicide.

Lifeline: 131 114

Lifeline is a national service that provides people experiencing a personal crisis with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

If you have any questions regarding this service, please contact Julie Poultney, Program Manager Mental Health on 4708 8176 or via email julie.poultney@nbmphn.com.au.

Lizz Reay

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