Mental Health Support for People in   
Residential Aged Care Facilities  
**Seeking Expressions of Interest for Service Providers**

**Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network (NBMPHN) is seeking Expressions of Interest from suitably qualified organisations or mental health clinicians to deliver treatment to people experiencing mild to moderate mental health issues residing in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs) in the Nepean Blue Mountains Region.**

**Background**

Mental health services are not routinely available to older people living in RACFs, and are not within scope of the personal care or accommodation services RACFs provide. There is evidence that RACF residents have very high rates of common mental illness. For example, it is estimated that approximately 39 percent of all permanent aged care residents are living with mild to moderate depression.

**About the program**

The Department of Health has provided funding to Wentworth Healthcare (provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network) to commission new mental health services for older people with mental illness who reside in RACFs in the Nepean Blue Mountains region. This is designed to address the current gap in services for this group of people and offer access to psychological services which are similar to those available to people with mental illness in the community under Medicare arrangements.

The service involves mental health professionals delivering evidence-based psychological therapies to residents identified as having mild to moderate mental health needs. The mental health professionals will also provide training to staff of each RACF to build their capacity to assist with better identification and referral of these residents.

Access to the new service require a diagnosis of a mental illness and a referral from either a GP or clinical nurse based at the participating RACFs. The service is intended to complement and integrate with, rather than substitute, existing services for older people with dementia and severe and complex psychiatric problems already available. Further details regarding intake, assessment and client management protocols are currently under development.

Phase 1 of the program commenced in February 2019, with support now being provided to residents in two participating RACFs, namely Uniting Springwood and Uniting Hawkesbury Richmond.

**Funding**

From July 2019, $180,000 will be available for a 12 month period to provide this service to a limited number of selected RACFs in the Penrith, Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and Lithgow LGAs. NBMPHN will identify the participating RACFs through a separate Expression of Interest process.

Further to Phase 2 (July 2019 – June 2020) NBMPHN is developing a long term plan for the commissioning of this program between now and full implementation by 30 June 2023. Over this four year period, the funding and scope of the program will expand, allowing NBMPHN to continue working with key stakeholders to develop a high quality, sustainable and equitable model for the delivery of mental health services in RACFs across the entire Nepean Blue Mountains region.

**Selection considerations**

The chosen provider/s will:

* Be appropriately trained and qualified mental health professionals
* Have demonstrated experience delivering similar services to elderly people residing in RACFs
* Have the ability to deliver training to staff in RACFs, providing them with tools to identify and support residents with mental health needs
* Have demonstrated experience of, and ability to, work with a multidisciplinary team
* Be prepared to work in collaboration with other service providers and stakeholders
* Be committed to providing ongoing support to RACF staff

**How to Apply**

If you are interested in participating in this program, please complete the attached form and return by 9 July 2019 to Alana Campbell, Program Support Officer: [Alana.Campbell@nbmphn.com.au](mailto:Alana.Campbell@nbmphn.com.au).

For further information please contact Kieran Mahony, Manager Mental Health Reform, on (02) 4708 8111 or [Kieran.Mahony@nbmphn.com.au](mailto:Kieran.Mahony@nbmphn.com.au).

**Expression of Interest- Mental Health Practitioner / Organisation**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Organisation name:** |  |  |  |
| **Address:** |  |  |  |
| **Phone:** |  |  |  |
| **Key contact for EOI:** | Name:  Position: |  |  |
| **Email address** |  |  |  |
| **Phone number** |  |  |  |
| **Organisation or individual practitioner** |  |  |  |
| **Capacity to deliver the service to** | 1 RACF  More (Please specify): |  |  |
| **Eligibility criteria:** | Appropriately trained and qualified mental health professional | Yes | No |
| Demonstrated experience delivering similar services to elderly people residing in RACFs | Yes | No |
| Ability to deliver training to staff in RACFs, providing them with tools to identify and support residents with mental health needs | Yes | No |
| Demonstrated experience of, and ability to, work with a multidisciplinary team | Yes | No |
| Be prepared to work in collaboration with other service providers and stakeholders | Yes | No |
| Commitment to providing ongoing support to RACF staff | Yes | No |

**Other Comments:**

**Further Information:**

In 500 words (total) or less, please describe:

1. Why you are interested in participating in this program
2. Your experience in providing mental health support to aged care residents and your understanding of the primary challenges/issues faced by this population;
3. The measures you would take to improve mental health outcomes for aged care residents; and
4. Any other information you feel is relevant to this application.