

## Questions and Answers – Canberra Head to Health

### What is the Head to Health Centre?

The Head to Health Centre is an adult mental health service which will offer easy to access, free mental health support, advice, assessment, and treatment. It is staffed by multidisciplinary teams including psychologists, social workers, and other mental health professionals, who will work closely with GPs, psychiatrists, and non-health services to support connections to services individuals may need. The Centre will provide telephone, video, and face-to-face services to best meet consumer needs. Over time it will become a centre to which people can turn to get information and advice on mental health issues and support better integrated services for people with different types of complex mental health needs.

This adult mental health centre is one of eight pilot centres established around Australia. Capital Health Network has commissioned Think Mental Health to deliver this service in the ACT.

### Who is it for?

The Centre is targeted to adults who are experiencing mental health distress and need advice and support managing their needs. It also will provide advice, information and emotional support to carers and family members who are concerned about their loved ones' mental health. The Centre will have a particular focus on providing care and service navigation to meet the needs of people with moderate to high levels of mental health need, including people who may have other non-health needs which significantly impact on their mental health. The service will not generally target children or young people, as their needs are more appropriately met by services such as headspace or other specialised child and youth mental health services provided through ACT Health.

### Why has it been established in Canberra?

CHN has heard that many people in Canberra have trouble accessing a timely and affordable mental health service that targets their particular needs. CHN is also aware there are people in Canberra with mental health needs too complex for traditional primary mental health care services, but who are not eligible for public community mental health services provided by the ACT Government. Often these people need a comprehensive assessment of their needs and access to well-planned care. They need assistance with connections to services in a way that integrates their care. The national model for Head to Health centres seeks to address these needs through providing a welcoming, soft entry point to immediate care and advice for people experiencing distress and their carers and families and a focus on multidisciplinary mental health care and service navigation.

## How will the service model work?

The national service model for Head to Health Centres involves:

- An easy to access entry point and initial assessment through a 1800 number or walking in to the centre;
- Immediate advice and support, including information about available services;
- A more comprehensive assessment if required;
- Referral and connection to appropriate services;
- Provision of a short to medium term episode of care for those who need multidisciplinary care;
- Assistance with service navigation.

A more detailed, localised service model for the Canberra Head to Health centre will be developed in consultation with local stakeholders and service users, to develop specific pathways and care.

## How can people access the services at the Centre?

The Centre's services can be accessed by ringing 1800 595 212 or by dropping in to the Centre at **ALIA House, 9 Napier Close, Deakin**.

## How is it different to other new mental health services which have been recently announced?

The Centre is one of three new mental health services which have been announced in recent weeks. In October CHN launched a **Head to Health Pop Up** service which is also accessed through the above 1800 number. The Pop Up service has been established to provide immediate access to mental health support for people experiencing anxiety or distress, particularly in the wake of recent COVID-19 lockdowns. It is intended to offer an immediate boost to available services ahead of the establishment of the Centre. In November a new **Safe Haven** service was launched in Belconnen town centre, which offers a safe space for people to go for emotional support if they are experiencing high levels of distress but do not need emergency care. The Safe Haven centre has been subject of a partnership between ACT Health and CHN. All three services will be closely connected to each other, and to existing ACT community mental health and primary mental health care services. This will help to ensure a 'no wrong door' approach to accessing services.

The below table provides a summary of the three new mental health services recently launched.

New mental health service	Who is it for?	What services does it provide?	More information
Canberra Head to Health Centre (Adult Mental Health Centre)	For adults experiencing distress and their families and carers. This includes people with conditions too complex for existing primary care services, but who are not eligible for ACT Health public community mental health services.	Comprehensive mental health assessments, short to medium term multidisciplinary care and service navigation to help connect people with complex needs to appropriate services.	The Centre can be accessed either through calling the 1800 number or through dropping in to the Centre at Deakin.
Head to Health Pop Up clinic and intake line	For anyone over 12 experiencing feelings of anxiety or depression or for their family or carers. This includes people still experiencing stress associated with COVID 19 and the recent lockdowns.	An initial assessment and referral will be provided through the phonenumber, together with some immediate advice on coping with symptoms and information on services. Those seeking services will be provided with short term psychological support. People with complex needs may be referred to the Canberra Head to Health Centre.	The Pop Up Clinic can also be accessed through the 1800 number. The Pop Up clinic will offer surge support over the coming months to help Canberrans deal with the higher than usual levels of psychological distress in the community associated with lockdowns and the Pandemic.
Safe Haven	People experiencing high levels of distress who would benefit from emotional support in a safe and calm environment.	The Safe Haven offers non-clinical support from trained peer workers with lived experience of mental health problems.	The Safe Haven can be accessed at the Belconnen Community Health Centre