

# Information sheet

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## Evaluation of the PHNs' improved access to psychological services in aged care initiative

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### Introduction

Thank you for your interest in this evaluation of the *Primary Health Networks' (PHNs) improved access to psychological services in residential aged care facilities initiative* (the initiative). This information sheet provides an overview of the evaluation and how you can contribute. Please read it carefully and contact the project team at Australian Healthcare Associates (AHA) if there is anything you want to know more about.

Participating in this evaluation is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to. If you do decide to take part, you can change your mind at any time.

### What is this evaluation about?

Many aged care residents experience mental health conditions like depression and anxiety. To improve their access to mental health care, the Australian Government introduced the initiative in 2018. As you may know, the initiative requires all PHNs across Australia to work with aged care facilities to make mental health care available to residents who are currently experiencing mental health conditions or who are likely to develop them in future.

The Australian Government Department of Health (the department) has engaged AHA to evaluate the initiative and identify:

- how it has been implemented and promoted
- whether it is meeting aged care residents' needs
- future directions for supporting aged care residents' mental health.

The evaluation is running from June 2021 to March 2022. During this time we will review relevant documents and service use data held by PHNs and the department. We are also seeking input from professionals like yourself with a role in referring or providing psychological services to aged care residents. In addition, we are seeking input from:

- Representatives of all PHNs across Australia
- Representatives of peak professional bodies in the health, mental health and aged care sectors
- Staff who work in participating aged care facilities
- Residents of participating aged care facilities and/or their families and other informal supports.

## What will I be asked to do?

Should you agree to participate you will be asked to complete a short, confidential **online survey** that will cover topics such as:

- The mental health services and referral pathways available for aged care residents in your region
- Your experience of referral and service delivery under the initiative
- Impacts of the initiative for aged care residents in your region
- How the initiative could be improved.

**The survey is available at: <https://bit.ly/3tUiCF5>.** It should take about 10-15 minutes, and can be completed any time between 20 September and 17 October 2021, using any internet-enabled device. Depending on your responses, at the end of the survey you may be invited to register your interest in taking part in a one-off **group interview** to discuss the initiative's implementation and impacts in more detail. Completing the survey does not mean you have to provide your contact details; you can submit your answers anonymously if you prefer. Similarly, entering your details does not mean you will be selected to participate, as only a small number of interviews will be conducted.

If you are one of the people selected, a member of our team will contact you by the end of October to confirm that you are happy to participate. We will provide you with some options for interview times and you will be able to choose the one that best suits you. The interview will include up to 6 participants and will be facilitated by a member of our team. It will take about 45 to 60 minutes, and will be conducted online (via Teams or Zoom). The interview will be audio recorded to ensure we have an accurate record of your contribution.

Completing any or all of the survey or interview tells us that you understand the information you've been given about the evaluation, are willing to take part, and agree to us using the information you provide to address the project's objectives. There are no costs associated with either the survey or interview, nor will you be paid.

## What are the possible benefits?

There will be no clear benefit to you from taking part in this project. However your contribution may help inform how psychological services are delivered in residential aged care in the future.

## What are the possible risks?

We do not anticipate any significant risks associated with either the survey or interview. However as you will be participating in a group interview, you may know or be known to other people in the group. If you do not wish to share you do not have to, and you are free to contact the AHA team after the interview to provide additional information that you did not feel comfortable discussing in a group setting. We ask that you maintain confidentiality and not disclose the identity of other participants or the content of the discussion to people outside of the interview.

## Will I hear about the results of this evaluation?

The findings of this project are expected to be submitted to the department in March 2022. The department reserves the right to publish the findings on its website.

## What will happen to information I provide?

Any information you provide as part of this project will be kept strictly confidential.

During the survey period, your responses will be stored on secure, Australian-based servers held by the Qualtrics online platform. When the survey closes we will securely transfer this data to a password-protected server at AHA. After the interview we will download the audio recording and store it, along with any notes we take during the interview, onto the same AHA server. Your survey responses, and our interview recording and notes will be retained for 5 years after we submit our final report, and then destroyed.

We hope that up to 100 people with a role in referring or providing psychological services to aged care residents will take part in this evaluation, and our reports will present information in a way that no individual can be identified. Where possible, we will combine information from everyone who participated. If we quote any of your individual responses, we will take extra care to ensure any information that could be used to identify you is removed.

## Where can I get further information?

More information about the evaluation is available on [AHA's website](#). You can also contact the project team at [phn\\_evaluation@ahaconsulting.com.au](mailto:phn_evaluation@ahaconsulting.com.au). If you have any complaints and would like to speak to someone outside of the AHA team, please contact the department at [psychologicalservices@health.gov.au](mailto:psychologicalservices@health.gov.au).