

Focused Psychological Strategies training for GPs providing care to children (5-12 years)

Expressions of interest are invited from general practitioners located in the North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) catchment to train to deliver focused psychological strategies (FPS) for children aged 5 to 12 presenting with a variety of mental health difficulties.

The training is for GPs who have already completed level one mental health skills training (MHST), through a General Practice Mental Health Standards Collaboration (GPMHSC)-accredited provider.

On successful completion of this course, GPs will be eligible to register with Medicare as an FPS provider and have access to additional Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) item numbers.

The course draws on skills such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and motivational interviewing. It will equip GPs to provide necessary interim supports to children and their families while they wait for specialist care. FPS can also be used for stand-alone interventions when referral to specialist services is not warranted.

The training is a collaboration between NWMPHN Emerging Minds, the lead agency for the National Workforce Centre for Child Mental Health.

Incentive payments of up to \$7,600 (ex. GST) per general practitioner are available for completion of all related activities, including the online learning modules, a reflective exercise and an evaluation. This training has been approved with the RACGP and ACCRM for 15 hours Education Activities, five hours Reviewing Performance and one hour Measuring Outcomes.

This training has been approved as an FPS ST accredited activity by GPMHSC.

Applications close at 5pm, Friday, 29 November 2024.

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PART A: THE ACTIVITY

1. Background

This FPS course comprises level two mental health skills training. It aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of GPs who have already completed level one.

It builds capability to deliver evidence-based psychological interventions for a variety of mental health presentations. Developed by Emerging Minds and NWMPHN, it is specifically geared to working with children aged 5-12 and their families where mental health concerns are present.

It is a key part of a suite of interventions to improve capability for people working closely with children in general practice throughout the NWMPHN region.

Applications will be assessed in accordance with the criteria contained in the attached application form [Attachment 3 \(.docx\)](#).

2. Activity purpose and term

In 2019–20 about 539,000 hours of mental health services were required for children under 11, according to the [Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System](#).

NWMPHN's most recent [Health Needs Assessment](#) found that the number children under 12 presenting with mental health difficulties (including acute mental health crises, such as suicidal behaviour) at general practices is increasing.

NWMPHN's 2024 specialised mental health needs assessment found:

- There is a rise in the complexity of mental health conditions among children, including increased suicidality, self-harm, and eating disorders.
- Concerns about body image, anxiety, and stress are prevalent even in primary school-aged children.
- Prolonged waitlists result in delayed diagnoses, emphasising the importance of early intervention.
- Fragmented service delivery limits outreach and engagement with young people.
- There is a need for specialised mental health training for community members, educators, and service providers to better support the growing complexity and demand.
- Children aged 0 to 9 show high rates of developmental vulnerability.
- A larger proportion of this cohort than any other represent avoidable mental health-related Emergency Department (ED) presentations, indicating a need for interventions targeted to early childhood.

Our research suggests that GPs lack the confidence and resources to effectively address children's mental health issues. This training package is designed to remedy these issues, boosting general practice team knowledge and capacity.

3. What's required?

Upon completion of all components of the training, each GP will be eligible to receive a maximum payment of \$7,600 (ex. GST), paid in two tranches. Full details on payments and invoicing can be found in the [Terms of Agreement \(.pdf\)](#).

The training package includes:

What	When	Payment
Online learning modules – see Attachment 2 for details		
10 online modules	A total of approximately 20 hours, self-paced, to be completed by 30 April 2025	Completion required for payment
Measuring outcomes		
Participation in a reflective activity (template to be provided)	On completion of the reflective activity (approx. 1 hour) by 31 May 2025	On submission of the reflective activity
Evaluation questionnaire	On completion of training	No payment associated

4. Eligibility requirements

To be eligible for the full payment, GPs must:

- be in the [NWMPHN region](#)
- have completed level one mental health skills training (MHST)
- complete all components of the training
- complete the reflective activity
- complete all evaluation activities

1.1.1 Attachments

Attachment 1 – [Terms of Agreement \(.pdf\)](#)

Attachment 2 – [Details of online learning modules \(.pdf\)](#)

Attachment 3 – [Application Form \(.docx\)](#)

PART B: HOW TO APPLY

1. Application submission

Applicants must complete and return the Application Form (Attachment 3) and email it with supporting documentation to the NWMPHN at education@nwmpnhn.org.au with 'EOI Emerging Minds GP FPS training' as the subject. Applications close at 5pm on Friday, 29 November 2024.

Please direct all queries to education@nwmpnhn.org.au with 'EOI Emerging Minds GP FPS training' as the subject.

NWMPHN is not obliged to accept any proposal received after the submission deadline. Where an Applicant provides evidence of exceptional circumstances affecting on-time submission, NWMPHN may decide to accept an application received after the submission deadline but is not obliged to do so.

2. Assessment process

All compliant applications received by NWMPHN will be evaluated in accordance with the assessment criteria in Part D.

NWMPHN may also consider other factors relevant to the Applicant's suitability including conflicts of interest, financial viability, current insurance and any other information that is publicly available.

NWMPHN will contact referees (if sought) and use their responses for the evaluation.

NWMPHN may contact the Applicant if it considers that an application contains an ambiguity, unintentional error or minor omission which requires clarification. It will not do so where this would unfairly disadvantage other Applicants.

NWMPHN may conduct interviews with some or all Applicants to assist in making a final decision. Interviews are an opportunity to ask questions to better understand a submission, not an opportunity to make changes or submit new material.

Applicants must clearly specify and justify all proposed departures from the Draft Contract in their EOI response using the form provided in Attachment 3. Applicants will be disqualified from the EOI if departures are not submitted with the EOI application form but are sought by Applicants at later stages of the process. NWMPHN is not obligated to accept an Applicant's proposed Draft Contract departures at any stage of the EOI.

Successful Applicants will be notified. Unsuccessful Applicants may apply for feedback in writing or verbally via to education@nwmpnh.org.au.

The following table summarises the key stages and indicative dates related to the EOI – ‘EOI Emerging Minds GP FPS training’.

EOI Key Stages	*Estimated Date
Release to the market (email)	Monday, 28 October 2024 or ASAP
Application closing date (email)	Friday, 29 November 2024
Evaluation	Wednesday 4 December 2024
Notification of successful and unsuccessful applications	Monday 9 December 2024

**These dates are indicative only and subject to change without notice at NWMPHN’s discretion to meet the necessary process requirements.*

3. Contractual arrangements

NWMPHN receives funding from the Australian Government, the Victorian Government, and other government and non-government sources. Each funding source may have particular requirements regarding consultancies and sub-contractors. Successful Applicants must comply with these.

A successful Applicant will be expected to:

- enter into an agreement in a form specified by NWMPHN
- sign a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement
- provide due diligence information such as a statement of solvency
- provide certificates of currency for relevant insurances:
 - Workcover or similar
 - Public Liability to \$20 million any one claim
 - Professional Indemnity to \$10 million any one claim
- undertake a financial audit for services exceeding \$100,000.00 in the aggregate per financial year
- consider itself a “Commonwealth service provider” for the purposes of the Ombudsman Act 1976
- ensure that personnel, including sub-contractors, who may come into contact with “vulnerable people” as part of the work, have undertaken a national police check, a Working with Children check and if relevant develop a risk assessment and management plan
- comply with relevant legislation as specified from time to time
- comply with NWMPHN credentialing policy requirements.

Applicants must disclose any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest arises where a person makes a decision or exercises power in any way that may or may be perceived to be, influenced by either professional, commercial or personal interests or associations. NWMPHN maintains a *Register of Conflicts of Interest and Related Entities* and reports its contents back to our funding bodies as required.

NWMPHN may seek formal government approval and will disclose contract details including legal and trading name of successful Applicant, the nature and duration of the work to be undertaken, and the procurement process. Approval is granted at the discretion of the government department. Relevant departments may require additional information at any time which NWMPHN is obliged to provide. Relevant departments may list this information on their websites from time-to-time.

Please note that the Australian or Victorian Government reserves the right to terminate NWMPHN funding at its convenience. This requirement is passed through to the successful Applicant. Expenses incurred and committed up to and including the termination date will be paid, if funds are received by NWMPHN.

4. No contract or warranty

No legal relationship is created by the issue of this Expression of Interest, or the submission of any application in response to it.

NWMPHN is under no obligation to award a contract to any Applicant as a result of this process.

NWMPHN has taken reasonable steps to ensure that all information presented in this Expression of Interest is accurate at the time of issue. However, NWMPHN accepts no responsibility for errors or omissions and recommends that Applicants make their own enquiries about any matter relevant to the preparation of an application.

PART C: ABOUT NORTH WESTERN MELBOURNE PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORK

Melbourne Primary Care Network (MPCN) trading as NWMPHN is an independent, locally governed and run, not for profit organisation dedicated to improving primary healthcare in local communities. MPCN was successful in its bid to operate one of 31 Primary Health Networks (PHNs) formally established across Australia from 1 July 2015.

PHNs have been established with the key objectives of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for patients, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes, and improving coordination of care to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place, at the right time.

They also work with the primary health care sector to improve frontline services and collaborate with local hospital networks to ensure better integration between primary and acute care services.

NWMPHN is the largest PHN in Victoria. Its region covers approximately 3,200 square kilometres across the Melbourne CBD, north and western suburbs and adjacent rural areas, encompassing 13 Local Government Areas.

A core task is to improve health outcomes for communities by fostering innovation, leveraging and coordinating existing community and organisational assets, and driving value for money.

- NWMPHN has five strategic objectives:
 - **Health System Innovation and Reform.** We aim to be a trusted partnering in building a high-performing and sustainable health care system.
 - **Person-centred health care.** We aim to listen to what people value in their health care and place this at the centre of all that we do.
 - **High performing primary health care services.** We aim to build the capability of primary health care providers.
 - **Population health needs and outcomes.** We aim to generate, translate and share data and evidence about population health needs and outcomes.
 - **Organisational excellence and sustainability.** We aim to work together to build a thriving organisation that is well-governed and financially and environmentally sustainable.