

Community consultations summary

1. Mental health need is rising and becoming more complex across our region

North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN) is noting growing demand, increasing complexity of presentations, and higher psychological distress, particularly in parts of the west and north. At the same time, workforce pressures and capacity constraints are intensifying, reinforcing the need for more coordinated and flexible models of care.

Figure 1 – NWMPHN at a glance



Source: NWMPHN 2024 Mental Health Needs Assessment

Figure 2 – Mental health in the region

Mental health challenges are present across all communities. NWMPHN's 2024 Mental Health Needs Assessment found:

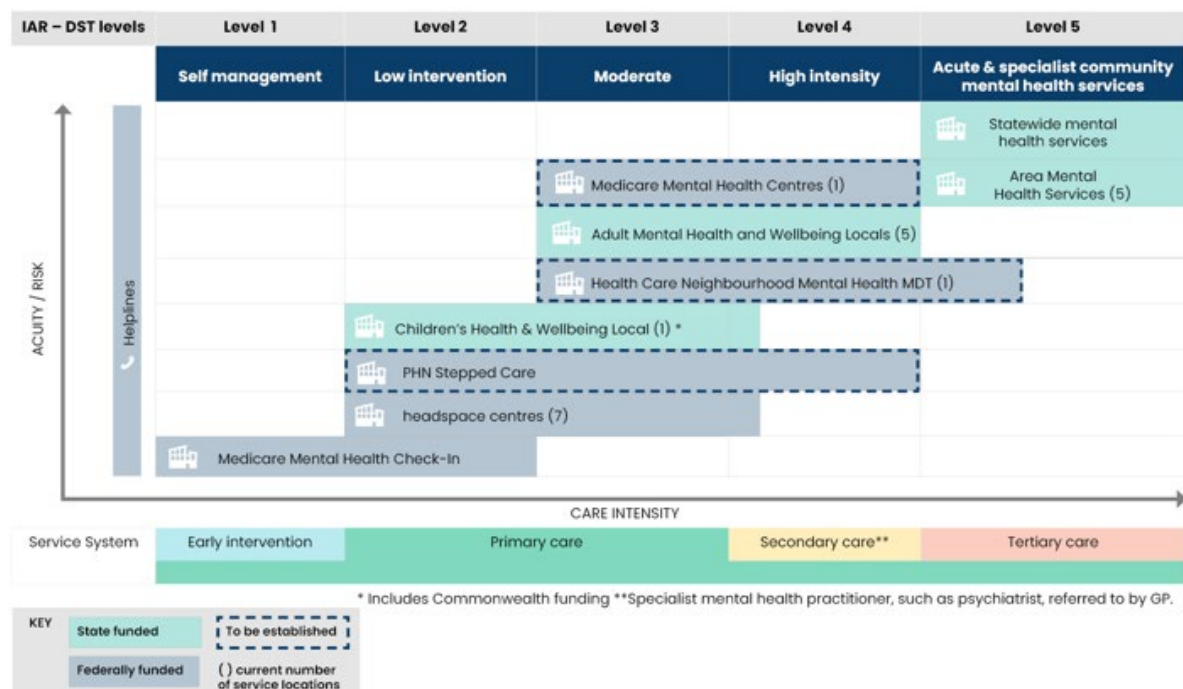
- Anxiety and depression across region
- Highest needs - Hume, Wyndham, and Brimbank
- Highest psychological distress - Brimbank, Darebin, Hobsons Bay and Merri-bek
- Highest need related to mental health conditions leading to presentation rates to emergency departments. (higher than the state average) in Yarra, Melbourne, and Darebin.



2. Investment is expanding access, but coordination is now critical

Significant state and Commonwealth investments (e.g. Adult and Child Locals, Medicare Mental Health Centres, headspace expansion) are reshaping the service landscape. While this improves access, it also increases system complexity- making integration, navigation, and continuity of care more important than ever. Figure 3 below demonstrates the current federal and state funded stepped-care landscape in Victoria.

Figure 3 – federal and state funded stepped-care in Victoria



3. Reforms are converging on shared principles of care

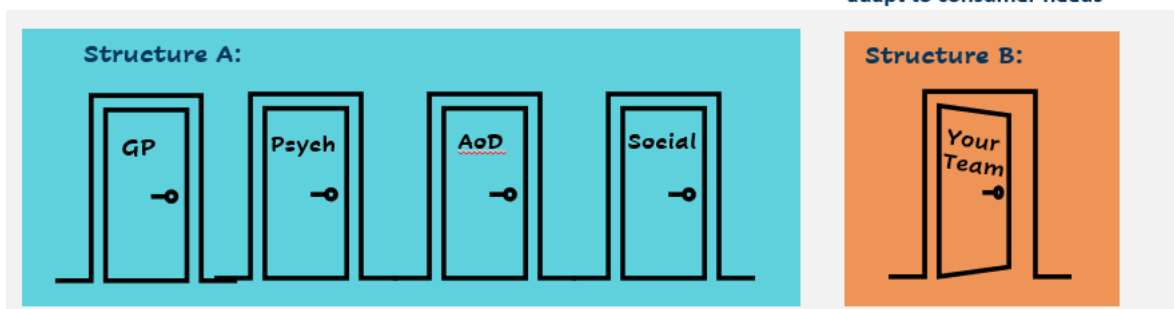
Mental health reforms are aligning around shared principles including multiple access points, culturally safe and flexible care, and multidisciplinary approaches. Crucially, multidisciplinary care is defined not by who sits in a team, but by how teams work together- through shared care planning, shared responsibility and coordinated delivery, so consumers experience care as connected rather than fragmented.

Professional silos or shared practice..

Multidisciplinary teams are defined by **how** professionals work together- not just **who** is employed.
Effective multidisciplinary care includes shared responsibility, shared planning and shared outcomes for consumers

Co-located disciplines; parallel practice; inconsistent shared planning

Shared goals and accountability;
Integrated care planning; roles
adapt to consumer needs



4. CAREinMIND™ will continue to evolve

Following review and co-design, CAREinMIND will continue to evolve as an integrated stepped care model. The refreshed model emphasises flexibility, continuity, clearer care planning, simpler referrals, and stronger provider networks- supporting better outcomes for consumers and more sustainable delivery for providers. [Watch this video here for more.](#)

5. Commissioning intentions

NWMPHN expects to commission a number of initiatives in the coming financial year,

- Health Care Neighbourhood- general practice led Mental Health Multidisciplinary team in Brimbank
- New Medicare Mental Health Centre in Broadmeadows
- Stepped care services (CAREinMIND) refreshed model.

More information regarding these opportunities will be communicated via our usual communication channels (including network newsletter) as the details are confirmed.

We acknowledge the peoples of the Kulin nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our work in the community takes place. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

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