

Mental Health Stepped Care model

FAQs

What is Stepped Care?

The Mental Health Stepped Care Model aims to enable patients to receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time. This unique, tailored model of care ensures the needs of each individual are responded to via the provision of a range of support types and levels of intensity. Services provided included a combination of one-on-one support, group support and care co-ordination, delivered by multi-disciplinary teams including peer support workers, psychologists, mental health nurses, counsellors, social workers, welfare workers and occupational therapists.

Who is Stepped Care for?

Patients who are presenting with need for mental health support, live or work in the EMPHN catchment, and cannot afford, or otherwise access similar services.

How do I access Stepped Care?

Stepped Care via many avenues, it can be accessed directly via the service providers, or by through the **SupportConnect** team. GPs can use the [SupportConnect](#) team to find the best service to refer their patients. Patients, family or other supports can also call directly on 9800 1071.

What is the change, compared with the previous model?

The model will be delivering support based on **a packages of care approach**, with the type of package of care provided being informed by the needs of each individual, as determined by the **Initial Assessment and Referral Decision Support Tool (IAR-DST)**. Care will continue to be delivered by multi-disciplinary teams with clinical and non-clinical staff, and will flex to be scaled up and down in intensity and responding to any change in the patient's presenting need.

How will I be informed of my patient's journey?

The Mental Health Stepped Care providers utilise a collaborative care approach, whereby key stakeholders involved in the patient's life, (including both professional and natural supports) are, with patient consent, involved in, and consulted and communicated with in relation to the support that the patient is receiving from the service.

Wherever possible a Collaborative Care Plan is developed by the service, involving input from the patient and their other supports, in order to ensure that all stakeholders are clear about each others roles and responsibilities. In such cases, a copy of the Collaborative Care Plan is provided to each stakeholder involved, with this plan being updated by the care team whenever the consumers goals, needs or care arrangements change.

When will the change happen?

Our providers have implemented changes from 3 January 2023.

Why is it changing?

After an evaluation of the existing model, a number of opportunities for improvement were identified. These included opportunities to further improve the way in which the model is delivered, whilst ensuring that the new model is congruent with the new State Government mental health reforms which are working to implement recommendations from the Royal Commission into mental health. The Mental Health Stepped Care program aims to continue to work with and build on existing systems and avoid the duplication of services.

IAR-DST – what is it?

The IAR-DST is a new tool to support GPs and clinicians to gather a persons presenting needs in eight standardised domains with a view to better match them to an appropriate level of care. The IAR-DST brings together existing assessment information rather than replace or require additional clinical assessment scales and processes. The tool is being adopted nationally and provides an evidence-based and objective approach to the initial assessment for patients seeking mental health support.

How do I learn more about the IAR-DST?

IAR-DST for mental health care training is available to GPs, general practice and the broader sector. EMPHN will commence IAR-DST training in mid 2023. To express your interest, see our [website](#). A once off \$300 payment (excl. GST) is available for eligible GPs who complete the two-hour training. We are working towards the IAR-DST training being a RACGP CPD Approved Activity for the triennium 2023-2026.