

# Psychological Strategies

## Transition to a new Stepped Care Model

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Under the direction of the Federal Government, Eastern Melbourne PHN (EMPHN) are planning for the transition and implementation of a new stepped care model for mental health services.

This transition will occur over the next 12 months, with a staged reduction in current contracting arrangements as we move to the new model. A key consideration during this transition is ensuring continuity of care for the community and supporting the provider sector during this time of change. As such, EMPHN is aiming to maintain services and support for current clients, whilst enabling service referral capacity for EMPHN stakeholders.

The strategy will comprise three phases:

### **Phase One:**

EMPHN has issued a variation for existing Allied Health Professional (AHP) 2016 – 2017 Service Level Agreements, with an extension for three months, up until 30 September 2017. During this time providers who agree to this variation will be eligible for new referrals.

### **Phase Two:**

AHP caseloads will be reviewed July – September 2017, and for those providers with active clients at 30 September 2017, a second variation with a further three-month extension will be provided. Concurrently, for those AHPs with this second variation, EMPHN will maintain some capacity to receive new referrals during this period. New referrals will be allocated to those AHPs with a second variation, as appropriate.

### **Phase Three:**

For those AHPs with active clients on 30 December 2017, EMPHN will work collaboratively with those AHPs, regarding arrangements for ongoing care of these clients and transition of psychological services.

Face-to-face psychological services delivered by credentialed mental health clinicians will be a component of the new stepped care model that is commissioned over the next six months. We plan to work closely with our service providers and provide regular communication to clients, carers and referrers as appropriate, about the transition to this new model to minimise disruption.

EMPHN understands that ongoing service delivery within this environment of change has been and is challenging for clinicians and clients, and that Psychological Strategies providers are understandably motivated to query the commissioning model for stepped care as it applies to psychological services.

If you have any queries please contact Craig Russouw on 9046 0300.

As always, thank you for your contribution to the EMPHN Psychological Strategies Program and for your support of the eastern Melbourne community.

