



Primary Source

Mental Health

Vol No.1 Issue No.2 January 2011

From the Principal Network Adviser

Welcome to the second edition of the Primary Source Newsletter on Mental Health. It has been a very distressing and traumatic start to the year with the flood crisis in Queensland and extending to NSW, Victoria, parts of Tasmania and Western Australia. Many divisions and practices have been affected across the network and we extend our thoughts to them. AGPN has developed a special floods section on the AGPN website which provides information, web links and media releases. Please [click here](#) for more details.



[Click here to view the events calendar.](#)

In this edition:

- The latest on the Australian Government's steps to assist Queensland Divisions of General Practice in supporting flood victims through the ATAPS Program,
- the national consultation currently being undertaken on the new ATAPS Tier 3 Flexible Care Packages (FCP)
- a network update on the Medicare Locals and Local Hospital Networks
- the membership of the National Expert Advisory Group on Mental Health
- the upcoming AGPN National Primary Mental Health Conference
- call for nominations for the HESTA/AGPN National Primary Health Care Awards and
- to introduce AGPN's new staff member assisting the Mental Health Program, Jacqui Tudor.

I hope you find this newsletter informative and if you know of others who may wish to subscribe send them to **AGPN's website** <http://www.agpn.com.au/media/subscribe>

Australian Government Response to the QLD Flood Crisis through ATAPS funding.

The Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) has written to all Divisions in Queensland informing them of how they can use existing ATAPS funds and how they can access additional funds to support people affected by the floods.

Use of existing funds

The Tier 2 funding pool can be directed to people affected by natural disasters such as the floods. DoHA will talk to individual Divisions about flexibility in the use of the Tier 2 funding to support the flood response. However there is no reason that Divisions should not be able to use these funds for service delivery to support an immediate mental health response to people impacted by floods. To ensure that ATAPS services are well targeted to meet the needs of people affected by the floods, the ATAPS parameters will be amended to offer additional flexibility for flood impacted individuals over the period to June 2011, these include:

- referral pathways will allow clients to commence receiving services prior to seeing a general practitioner (GP). However, clients are still required to see a GP while they are receiving the psychological services, preferably within two weeks of commencement of services
- eligibility criteria will be relaxed so that services can be accessed by clients who do not necessarily have a diagnosed mental disorder but are at risk of self harm or of developing a disorder
- Further flexibilities will be negotiated following discussions with Queensland Health. It is also likely that provisional referrals may be received from Centrelink or other Government organisations dealing with people impacted by the floods.

Additional funding for medium term response

DoHA has identified additional funding available in 2010-11 that can be directed over the next six months (to 30 June 2011) to provide support to Divisions experiencing increased demand for services as a result of the floods. This will allow the Department to assess the longer term need for additional funding in response to the floods in Queensland and other states and include that in the 2011-12 funding to Divisions as appropriate.

Queensland Divisions wishing to access additional funding will need to provide DoHA with a brief funding proposal by email as soon as possible, or to indicate if they do not wish to apply for extra funds. Additional funding will be provided for the period to 30 June 2011 and will be through a Deed of Variation to the existing ATAPS funding agreement.

For further details the Queensland Divisions can contact Lana Racic, Director, Community Services Section, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Programs Branch on **02 6289 8545** or via email

lane.racic@health.gov.au or **Angela Armati, Assistant Director, Community Services Section on 02 6289 8448** or via email angela.armati@health.gov.au.

National Consultations on ATAPS Tier 3 Flexible Care Packages

In December, the Department of Health and Ageing announced a national consultation to be conducted over January/February 2011 on the Flexible Care Packages as part of the expanded ATAPS Program. AGPN was asked by DoHA to co-ordinate 5 representatives from the Network to attend consultation forums in each capital city. The consultations commenced on 19 January in Melbourne and will conclude in Perth on 8 February.

LOCATION	DATE	VENUE
Melbourne	19 January	Best Western Airport Motel and Convention Centre
Hobart	20 January	Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart
Canberra	24 January	The Hellenic Club of Canberra, Woden
Sydney	25 January	Mercure Hotel, Sydney Airport
Adelaide	28 January	Hilton Hotel, Adelaide
Darwin	2 February	Novotel Atrium, Darwin
Brisbane	4 February	Medina Executive Brisbane
Perth	8 February	InterContinental Hotel Perth Burswood

AGPN has been working with the State Based Organisations (SBOs) in each state and territory to coordinate representation at the consultations.

In addition, AGPN is conducting supplementary consultations in each of the larger jurisdictions to enable all Divisions to have input into the consultation and for AGPN to provide a consolidated report to DoHA from the Network. Again, we have been working with the SBOs in organising these forums which are scheduled as follows:

LOCATION	DATE	VENUE	CONTACT
Melbourne	20 January	GP Victoria	Peter Gartside p.gartside@gpv.org.au
Adelaide	27 January	Grand Chifley Adelaide	Reg Harris RHarris@epdgp.org.au
Sydney	2 February	Mercure Hotel, Sydney Airport	Jane Westley janewestley@gpns.com.au
Brisbane	3 February	Novotel Brisbane Airport	Karen Hale-Robertson kHale-Robertson@gpql.com.au
Perth	9 February	Technology Park Function Centre	Paula Braimbridge paulab@ogpn.com.au

If you have been on leave and haven't been aware of the consultations, or you work on the ATAPS program in a

Division and wish to attend one of the remaining consultations, please contact the relevant person in your state. The AGPN consultations are primarily for those administering the ATAPS program or employed within Divisions to provide ATAPS services. The DoHA consultations are for a broader stakeholder group including NGOs, State Government etc. The consultation paper is available on the DoHA website ([Click here for the link](#)). Anyone wishing to make a written submission can do so by 11 February 2011.

AGPN will also be conducting some structured interviews with a small sample of GPs who will be notified in due course.

Rural and Remote Mental Health Symposium

The **3rd Rural and Remote Mental Health Symposium "Impacts and Outcomes"** will be held from the **14th-16th November 2011 at Mercure Hotel, Ballarat, Victoria**. Confirmed Speakers include:

Jaelea Skehan - Program Manager Mindframe National Media Initiative

Dr. Helen Berry - MA Hons (French) Aberdeen, BSc (Psych) ANU, BAppPsych Hons UC, PhD (Epidemiology & Population Health) ANU

Janet Devlin - Coordinator, Mental Health and Community Engagement Programs at the Spencer Gulf Rural Health School

Dr John Setchell - General Manager, Health Services Royal Flying Doctor Service

The **Call for Abstracts** is open till the 2nd of May 2011. Please be sure to submit your work via the Symposium website www.anzmfh.asn.au/rrmh11

Registrations will be opening shortly - visit the website for details.

For further information please contact:

Laura Hancock

Conference Secretariat

ruralhealth@anzmfh.asn.au

Network update

The boundaries for **Medicare Locals and Local Hospital Networks** have been announced.

Medicare Locals and Local Hospital Networks will mean Australians will benefit from access to better coordinated health care and more efficient use of resources and will find it easier to navigate between service providers and

health services.

A total of 42 Medicare Local boundaries have been agreed across all states and territories with the exception of Victoria. The Commonwealth has extended the time for the resolution of the boundaries with the new Victorian Government until the end of January. The first group of Medicare Locals and their associated branch offices will begin operating in mid 2011, with the remainder starting in mid 2012. Medicare Local boundaries were developed following consultations with the states and territories and consideration of approximately 120 submissions from the health sector and the wider community.

[View the Medicare Local boundaries](#)

For further information about primary health care reform go to: <http://www.agpn.com.au/media/Primary-Health-Care-Reform>

Establishment of new national Expert Advisory Group on Mental Health

On 23 December 2010, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, Mark Butler announced the establishment of a new Expert Advisory Group on Mental Health that will provide the Federal Government with advice on the important reforms needed in the mental health sector.

The Minister said that the creation of the new, time limited, specialist group would allow for targeted advice to be provided directly to the Australian Government on how to achieve the most coordinated, cost-effective and lasting reforms for our investment in mental health care.

Membership of the Group:

- Mr Mark Butler, MP Chair
- Monsignor David Cappo AO, Vice-Chair, Australian Social Inclusion Board.
- Professor Patrick McGorry AO, Executive Director, Orygen Youth Health and Australian of the Year.
- Professor Ian Hickie AM, Executive Director, Brain and Mind Research Institute.
- Dr Andrew Fuller, Clinical Psychologist, Department of Psychiatry, University of Melbourne.
- Dr Pat Dudgeon, Clinical Psychologist, School of Indigenous Studies, The University of Western Australia.
- Ms Janet Meagher AM, Divisional Manager (Inclusion), Psychiatric Rehabilitation Australia.
- Dr Christine McAuliffe, General Practitioner.
- Ms Sally Sinclair, Chief Executive Officer, National Employment Services Association.
- Professor Frank Oberklaid OAM, Director, Centre for Community Child Health, The Royal Children's Hospital.

- Mr Toby Hall, Chief Executive Officer, Mission Australia.
- Mr Anthony Fowke AM, President of Association of Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Ill (ARAFMI) Australia.
- Dr Christine Bennett, Chief Medical Officer, BUPA Australia.

2011 National Primary Mental Health Conference

This year's Primary Mental Health Conference will be held on Tuesday 12 and Wednesday 13 April at the Citigate King George Square Hotel, Brisbane. More information will be available following the ATAPS Consultations as we begin the process of organising this conference and details will be available soon on the events page of the [AGPN website](#). It's an exciting and challenging time in primary mental health care and the conference will be an important event for hearing updates on primary health care reform, ATAPS, headspace and many other topics. Put this date in your diary now and plan to be there.

Nominations for the National Primary Health Care Awards open in March 2011

Australia's frontline health service providers will now be able to achieve well earned recognition and rewards for outstanding performance through the inaugural **HESTA Primary Health Care Awards**.

HESTA in conjunction with AGPN created these awards to mark excellence in primary health care.

HESTA CEO Ms Anne-Marie Corboy said the awards were designed to recognise innovation and leadership.

"These are two fundamental elements of a skilled and responsive health workforce," Ms Corboy said.

AGPN CEO David Butt said the awards were timely in light of the incredible health reform agenda facing this sector.

"These awards recognise the role of all those who are usually the first the community turns to when they are sick or injured," Mr Butt said.

ME Bank has provided \$25,000 in prize money for the awards which will culminate in a gala dinner at the AGPN's National Forum, to which finalists will be flown.

There are three categories for nominations:

Young leader

Individual distinction

Team excellence



Nominations open in March 2011 and can be made online at <http://www.phcawards.com.au/>

Introducing Jacqui Tudor, Network Support Officer, Mental Health, AGPN

I am pleased to welcome Jacqui Tudor to the position of Network Support Officer in a temporary capacity. Jacqui will be assisting me administratively and supporting the Mental Health Program at AGPN.

Jacqui can be contacted on either jtudor@agpn.com.au or (02) 6228 0850 and is based in Canberra at the national office. If you having trouble contacting me, give Jacqui a call.

Mental Health project contact: jparham@agpn.com.au

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