

Psychological Therapies in Western Downs

Expression of Interest

EOI – Psychological Therapies in Western Downs Guide

Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN, in partnership with CheckUP, invites Expressions of Interest (EOI) to deliver psychological therapies services in the Western Downs Region.

This EOI is open to suitably qualified and experienced practitioner-led providers where the clinician holds primary clinical responsibility for service delivery.

Background

This procurement is part of a broader, place-based mental health initiative designed to improve access to mental health care and support for people living in the Western Downs region, with a key focus on communities in Chinchilla, Miles and Tara.

As part of the wider *Living Network**, the service is expected to be locally embedded, responsive to community needs, and connected to the wider service ecosystem – including general practice, community organisations, and informal supports. The successful applicant(s) will deliver evidence-based psychological therapies to underserved groups experiencing mild to moderate, and where appropriate, severe and complex mental health concerns.

Operating independently within the Western Downs community, providers will maintain a consistent caseload in line with agreed targets and key performance indicators, build and sustain effective referral relationships with local GPs and other health and community services, and engage in outreach across the region to ensure services are accessible to people in communities beyond a single fixed location.

The successful applicant(s) will coordinate with the PHN and the *Living Network* to ensure care prioritisation to support an equitable response across the region and will participate in relevant reporting and quality activities as required under the service agreement. A strong understanding of the rural and regional context, and an existing presence within the Western Downs, will be essential to meeting these expectations effectively.

**The Living Network represents the integrated mental health service model being established in the Western Downs region by the PHN (see attachments for more information).*

Purpose

This service is commissioned under the Commonwealth PHN program for psychological therapies provided to underserved groups, consistent with the [PHN Primary Mental Health Care Guidance](#). The following activities are within scope:

- Delivery of evidence-based, short-term individual psychological therapies to people experiencing mild to moderate mental health concerns who face barriers to accessing MBS-subsidised services
- Assessment, care planning, and goal setting with clients at the commencement of therapy

- Delivery of structured, evidence-based therapeutic interventions including but not limited to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and other modalities appropriate to presenting need and practitioner competency
- Outreach-based delivery across the Western Downs region, including travel/in person service delivery to Chinchilla, Miles, Tara, and surrounding communities
- GP liaison, shared care communication, and warm referral to other services
- Culturally safe practice and culturally adapted delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and CALD communities
- Crisis risk assessment and safety planning where risk emerges within an existing therapeutic relationship, with clear escalation to appropriate services
- Participation in care coordination with PHN commissioned service providers, including those as part of the *Living Network*.
- Clinicians delivering psychological therapies services under this agreement cannot concurrently bill MBS for services provided to clients – double billing of PHN-funded sessions is not permitted.

Working with others and connecting to the broader system

The Western Downs psychological therapies service is part of a larger regional mental health system. The PHN and HHS has a joint regional planning group - *the Healthy Minds Healthy Lives* Executive Committee - that oversees how all the pieces of this system fit together, including connecting to Hospital and Health Services. The successful applicant(s) won't be expected to attend this committee, but the way they deliver their service should reflect the same principles it upholds: shared care, stepped care, and working in a connected way with other services.

The PHN will make sure the successful applicant(s) has enough visibility of the broader system to deliver care that is well connected and makes sense for the local context.

The successful applicant(s) will need to build good working relationships with other services and organisations in the area. This means developing clear referral pathways and protocols with key partners in the *Living Network* and across the wider service system, and making sure local partners and referrers understand what the service offers and how to access it.

Key partners will include PHN-commissioned suicide prevention, alcohol and other drug, and child and youth mental health services, Hospital and Health Services, General Practitioners, and other local services not commissioned by the PHN. Good collaboration with these partners means clients can access connected, specialist, and wraparound support when they need it.

The successful applicant(s) will also work closely with the Medicare Mental Health Phone Service as a warm referral and navigation partner, so clients can move easily between face-to-face and phone-based support depending on what works best for them.

The PHN is also establishing new GP-led Mental Health Multidisciplinary Teams (MH-MDTs) in Goondiwindi and Western Downs. It is important that the successful applicant(s) works closely with these teams from the outset, so both initiatives are well connected and complement each other as part of the local PHN service offering. The PHN will actively support and coordinate this connection.

Tender Amount

\$282,000.00 for 1 July 2026 – 30 June 2027.

Information session – Market briefing

The PHN will be providing an information session on this opportunity via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 20 August, 5:00pm – 6:00pm. Please sign up for the session via this link: <https://ddwmpnh.jotform.com/262251041968053>.

Key Dates

- Expression of Interest – Wednesday 12 August, 9:00am
- Information session – Thursday 20 August, 5:00pm-6:00pm
- Questions regarding this tender close – Friday 4 September 6:00pm
- Expression of Interest close – Wednesday 9 September, 11:59pm
- Contract period – October 2026 – 30 June 2027

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview following tender submission.

How to apply

All applications are to be submitted via <https://www.ddwmpnh.com.au/tenders>. Please address the selection criteria outlined in the Assessment Criteria Guide.

Enquiries

Any enquiries can be directed to healthymindshealthylives@ddwmpnh.com.au.

To promote equity and meet probity requirements, to all parties, anyone making enquiries via email, telephone or in person will be directed to submit their enquiry via this inbox where all parties may see the PHN response.

PHN responses will be updated regularly at <https://www.ddwmpnh.com.au/tenders>.

List of Appendices

Appendix A	https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021/04/phn-primary-mental-health-care-guidance-psychological-therapies-provided-by-mental-health-professionals-to-underserved-groups.pdf
Appendix B	https://ddwmpnhnetwork.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/MentalHealthTeam/IQDa0MDTvscRY3vHGrWclAzAdgLCm3v8R1UuKkXHPublis?e=UOh39t