

For immediate release

Service providers announced for Darling Downs and West Moreton Head to Health network

25 May 2023

Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN has announced the selection of service providers to deliver the Head to Health network in the region.

The local network will include the Head to Health national phone service and Head to Health sites in Kingaroy and Ipswich.

The following providers have been selected through a competitive, open-market tender:

- **Neami National** will deliver the national phone service for Darling Downs and West Moreton.
- **Open Minds** will deliver services in Kingaroy and Ipswich.

Once established, the Head to Health centres will provide welcoming and enhanced access to mental health support through assessment and warm referrals and the national phone line will support residents in the whole Darling Downs and West Moreton region to navigate the mental health system.

The Kingaroy and Ipswich Head to Health sites will also provide immediate short- or medium-term support for people who require mental health support at any level, including people who are experiencing a crisis or significant distress.

Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN CEO Lucille Chalmers said the PHN had undertaken a comprehensive process to determine the most suitable service providers.

“Neami National and Open Minds are both long-standing mental health service providers who are highly capable of delivering these services,” said Ms Chalmers.

Co-design panels in Kingaroy and Ipswich provided significant input into the requirements of the Ipswich and Kingaroy services prior to the tender process.

“We have worked closely with our partners in the community to co-design Head to Health services that will complement existing services and meet local need,” said Ms Chalmers.

“Our local Head to Health network will be a welcoming open door to mental health support for our community and will help relieve pressure on GPs and hospitals.”

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The PHN will work in partnership with Neami National and Open Minds, along with Darling Downs Health, West Moreton Health, the co-design stakeholders, and the local community as the services are operationalised.

“Open Minds is excited to partner with the PHN, along with local HHSs, Neami and the local community to deliver this vital mental health service to Ipswich and Kingaroy,” said Kate Johnson, COO, Open Minds.

The broader community across the region will also be well supported by the phone line service.

“We’re excited to work alongside the PHN to streamline access to mental health and wellbeing support, through the delivery of the Head to Health phone line. The delivery of this service builds on our experience in other areas across Australia and enables us to bring the best practice and learnings from those places to better respond to the needs of the local Darling Downs and West Moreton community,” said Tom Dalton, CEO, Neami National.

“When a person calls Head to Health, they’ll be connected with a member of our team, including clinicians and those with lived experience of mental health and wellbeing challenges. The team will listen and work with people to connect them with the right support to address their immediate or ongoing mental health and wellbeing needs.”

The PHN initially secured Head to Health funding in May 2022 as part of a national \$487.2 million Mental Health and Suicide Prevention package.

The phone service was initially established in July 2022 to align with the national rollout and delivery of this service will continue uninterrupted.

The establishment of Ipswich and Kingaroy Head to Health sites is now underway, with initial operations anticipated for late 2023.

About the Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN

We are a not-for-profit organisation who partners with community organisations, health care providers, hospital and health services, and state and federal governments to improve primary health care services in our communities.

We work within the Darling Downs and West Moreton region to better understand, support and improve the health of people living in our region.

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We bring together GPs, general practice staff, allied health professionals, hospital and health services, Aboriginal Medical Services, community service providers, Elders and community members to identify the services that are needed the most, and then we fund programs and services based on these needs.

We also support primary health care providers, like GPs, practice managers, practice nurses and allied health professionals, to improve the care they provide to their patients.

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