



**Grand
Pacific
Health**



NEXT STEPS

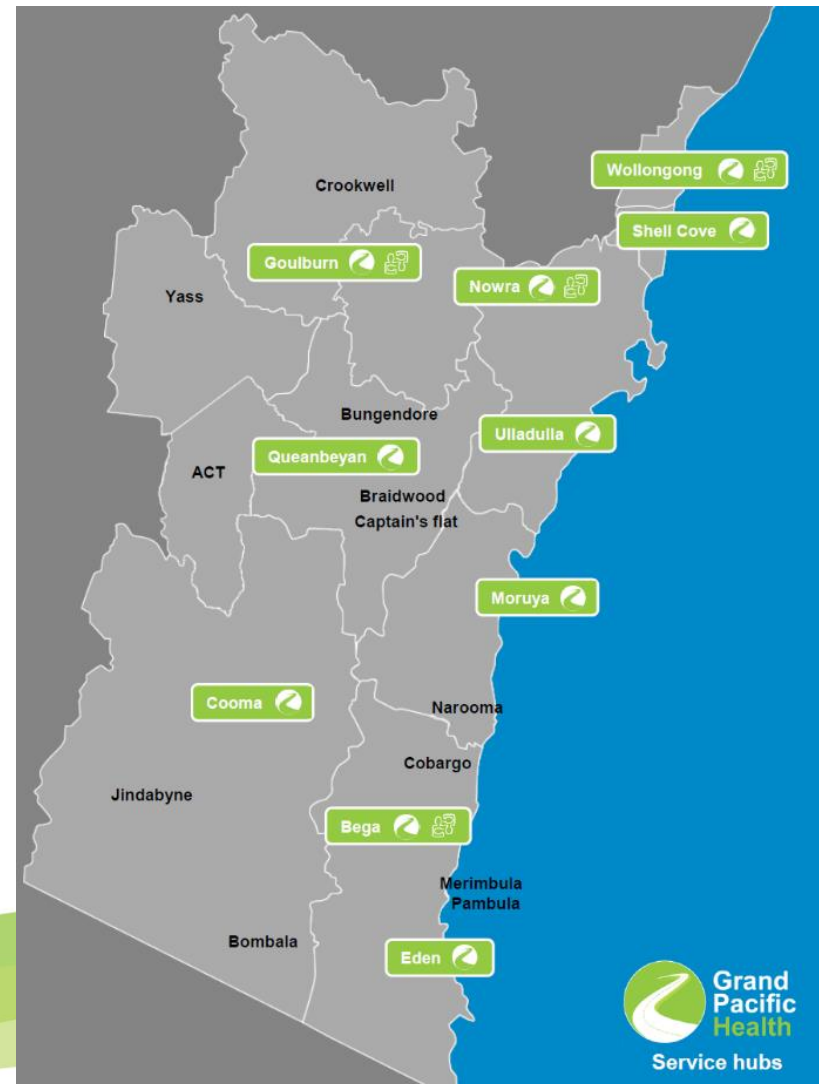
Suicide Prevention Aftercare Program

NEXT STEPS

Suicide Prevention Aftercare Program

GPH PRESENCE

- 250 employees
- 60 registered Mental Health Clinicians
- 17 Peer Workers
- 100,000 occasions of service





NEXT STEPS

Suicide Prevention Aftercare Program

WHAT IS IT?

Began in 2017 and now covers Wollongong, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla, Bega, Goulburn and Queanbeyan ED's.

For those presenting at ED who have attempted suicide or are at significant risk of suicide.

Referral pathways in:

- CNC or Registrar at ED
- Community Mental Health
- Mental Health Line
- Aboriginal partner organisations

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WHAT IS IT?

- Begins with a Planning Meeting with a MH Clinician and **Peer Worker** where goals are set collaboratively with the consumer and their carer(s).
- **Peer Worker** then facilitates the consumer to achieve these goals and set new ones as necessary.
- Reviews with MH Clinician and **Peer Worker** at 4 weeks and at discharge (maximum length 12 weeks).
- Flexible service which aims to be **consumer led**.
- Can work alongside Acute Care Team where they are still providing follow-up phone calls. Or in parallel with Community Mental Health clinicians, providing **peer work reintegration support** while they provide mental health therapy.
- Can also work in parallel to other GPH provided services such as Suicide Prevention Risk De-escalation therapy and Integrated Recovery Services.

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WHAT IS IT NOT?

- **It is not a mental health therapy service**, although referral to such services might be part of the goals facilitated by the peer worker. GPH provide such a service, particularly focused on suicidality, in all locations so an internal referral is seamless.
- **It is not long-term support**, the program aims to facilitate the consumer connecting with both natural and formal supports, always working towards independence and self-determination as is appropriate.
- **It is not a service available to all referrers**, the only referrals accepted are from the LHD and our Aboriginal partner organisations.
- Next Steps does not accept referrals for those who are admitted to MH inpatient units, but in SE NSW, we do accept referrals for those consumers upon their discharge.

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OUR PARTNERS

- In the Illawarra-Shoalhaven region:
 - Next Steps is funded by NSW Health under the Suicide Prevention Innovation Fund (State)
 - Flourish Australia provides most of the peer workers
 - South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation provide culturally appropriate peer work in the Shoalhaven area
- In SE NSW region (south of Nowra):
 - Next Steps is funded by Coordinare, the local PHN (Federal)
 - GPH employs most of the Peer Workers
 - Katungal Aboriginal Corporation provide culturally appropriate peer work in Bega and Batemans Bay
- Both regions have a Steering Committee made up of representatives of all these partner organisations that meets regularly.

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WHAT IS INNOVATIVE ABOUT IT?

- Previously, a large proportion of MH presentations to ED were discharged into the care of their GP and received little to no follow up.
- Next Steps was one of the first government-funded Aftercare services in the country. Recently, many other areas are recognising the same gap and looking to provide services in this space.
- The Next Steps program **combines clinical and peer work support**. On the final survey, **94% of consumers identify peer work involvement as the “most helpful” aspect of the program**.
- The Next Steps program is a collaboration between several NGOs with a close working relationship at all levels of the two LHDs involved.
- The pilot was funded by NSW Health in the Illawarra-Shoalhaven and then the PHN offered to fund an expansion of the model to cover SE NSW. Good example of funders working together to build a coherent service sector.

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WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES?

- The program has been well received but the process of getting regular referrals from all the LHD staff is complex. Referrers are sometimes “change-weary” of the dynamic landscape and may prefer to just refer to the programs they are used to.
- There is great diversity in the EDs being serviced. For example, Wollongong Hospital may have more presentations and a much lower rate of admission to inpatient units than Bega or Goulburn. Our processes must make allowances for local differences, while maintaining consistency of service.
- Some consumers entering the program are in a particularly chaotic time in their lives and Peer Workers need to work hard to engage and maintain contact with them.
- Although outgoing referrals are a large part of the program, there are some areas (particularly rural areas) where there are limited services and creative solutions must be found (eg Telehealth).

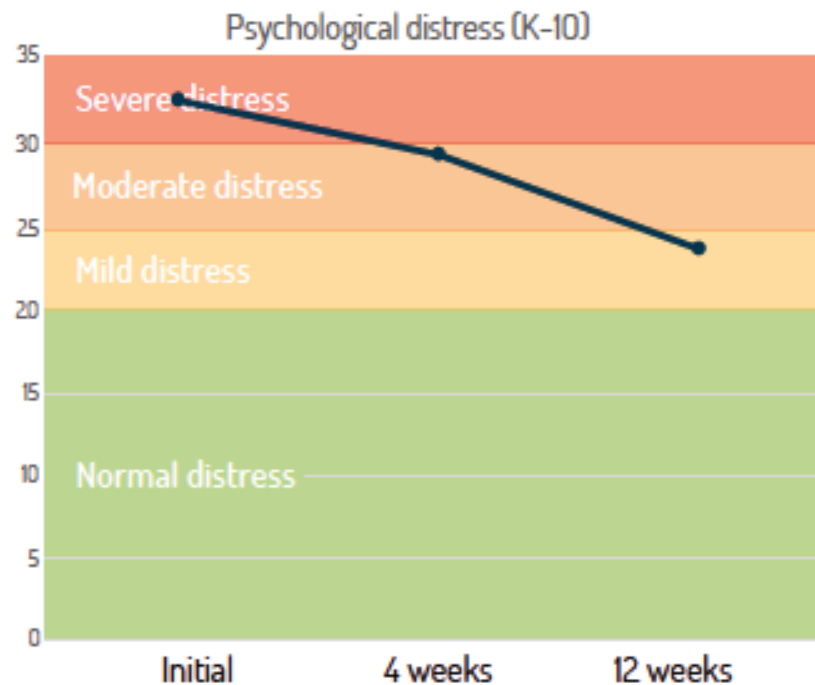
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DOES IT HELP?

100%

of people engaged
with *Next Steps*
said the program
was helpful in their
recovery





NEXT STEPS

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DOES IT HELP?

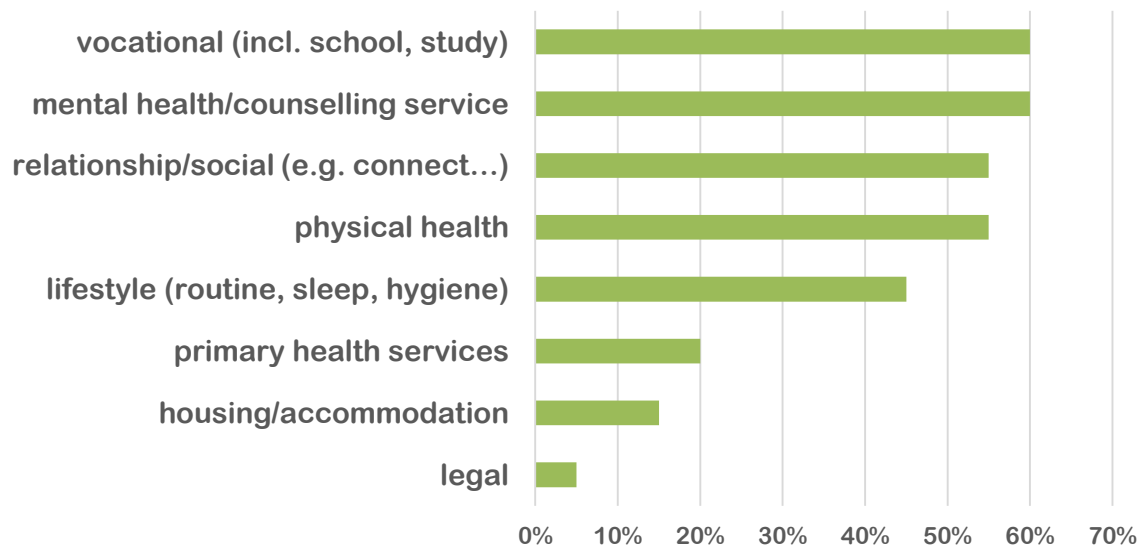
- Consumers complete the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale:
 - Upon entry into the program, 0% of consumers scored in the “normal-mild” range for depression
 - This increased to 60% scoring in the “normal-mild” range at discharge at 8 or 12 weeks
- Improved an average of 5.87 points on the Beck Helplessness Scale.
- Improved an average of 10.19 points on the “burdensomeness” subscale of the Interpersonal Needs Questionnaires.
- At 4 weeks, 18.18% reported decreased “wish to die”, which increased to 57.14% at discharge (8 or 12 weeks).

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GOALS

What are suicidal people identifying as key goals for their recovery?



100%

of people have partly or fully completed at least one goal from their Next Steps aftercare plan

82%

of people engaged with Next Steps have been helped to connect with other community-based support services

NEXT STEPS Suicide Prevention Aftercare Program

QUOTE FROM JO KAIN NEXT STEPS PEER WORKER - GOULBURN

“My participant talks about seeing glimpses of her old self more often now. She talks about hope and goals.

I remind her of the progress she has made, and she reminds me all the time of why I do what I do.

That this approach works, that it is different, it is pioneering, it is evolving and most of all it is making a difference.”

[Carer & Consumer Forum Video](#)

