



# PSS

## PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT SERVICES



## Psychological Support Services (PSS) Referrers Guide

Updated November 2021

## What is PSS?

**Psychological Support Services (PSS)** provides free, short term psychological therapy (face-to-face or telehealth) for people who live, work or study in the central and eastern Sydney region and are experiencing mild to moderate mental health concerns as well as financial hardship, which may limit their access to Medicare subsidised psychological services.

**Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network (CESPHN)** funds organisations to deliver a limited funded service across our region.

The PSS program offers two streams of care with clear eligibility requirements for each:

- PSS program; 18 sessions of focused psychological strategies
- Suicide Prevention Service program (SPS): up to 12 sessions within a 2-month period of care – non acute



## Who is PSS for?

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Individuals who are currently experiencing financial hardship (individuals with income below \$55,000 or a combined family income below \$130,000) and are either:

- 1** Children (aged between 0-12 years who have not yet graduated from primary school) with, or who are at risk of developing a mild to moderate mental, emotional, or behavioural disorder
- 2** Young people (12-25 years)
- 3** Adults
- 4** Individuals who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and/or Queer (LGBTQ)
- 5** Individuals experiencing perinatal depression and their partners
- 6** Individuals who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- 7** Individuals who identify as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)
- 8** Individuals who have attempted, or who are at risk of suicide, or self-harm
- 9** Individuals experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness
- 10** Individuals with severe mental health concerns who may benefit from short term focused psychological intervention as part of their overall care
- 11** Individuals with mild intellectual disability who may benefit from short term psychological intervention when co-occurring mental health concerns are diagnosed

## How does PSS work?

- 1 Referrals are submitted online or via Healthlink to CESPHN mental health central intake by a Medical Practitioner (MP) or Non-Medical Practitioner (NMP).
- 2 All referrals are triaged for eligibility and to ensure PSS is the appropriate service.
  - *Should a referral be declined, the referrer will receive communication from CESPHN triage team with recommended pathways where appropriate.*
- 3 Approved referrals are allocated to a registered PSS MHP.
- 4 An automated no-reply email notification will be sent to email address provided on the referral form once the PSS Mental Health Professional (MHP) accepts the PSS referral.
- 5 The PSS MHP will contact the individual to arrange the first session.
- 6 The PSS MHP will provide an update to the individuals GP.
- 7 GP review required should further support be needed after session 12 to access sessions 13-18
- 8 At discharge from PSS program MHP and GP to coordinate ongoing care as required.

## Who provides PSS?



Services are delivered by appropriately trained and qualified Mental Health Professionals (MHP).

These include Psychologists (general and clinical), mental health nurses, mental health accredited social workers, mental health accredited occupational therapists and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health workers.

## Who can refer to PSS?

**Medical Practitioners:** GPs, psychiatrists, paediatricians, obstetrician-gynaecologist (peri-natal only).

**Non-Medical Practitioners** can refer individuals to PSS for an assessment (up to three sessions) with a PSS registered mental health professional prior to development of a GP Mental Health Treatment Plan. See table below.

Underserved Groups	Referrers
<b>Children (0 – 12 years and under)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School Counsellors</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School Principal/Deputy</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Directors of Early Childhood Services</li> </ul>
<b>Adolescents (12 – 25 years)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> headspace Youth Access Team</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School Counsellors</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School Principal/Deputy</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School Head of Welfare</li> </ul>
<b>Perinatal Depression</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maternal and Child Health Nurses and allied health professionals</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lactation Consultants</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Midwifery and neo-natal nurse</li> </ul>
<b>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal Health Workers/ Care coordinator/ Outreach worker</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Youth health and well-being coordinators</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Managers of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS)</li> </ul>
<b>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multicultural Community Health Liaison Officers</li> </ul>
<b>Suicide Prevention (non-acute)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Practitioners</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acute mental health teams</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Psychiatric Emergency Care Centres</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> headspace Centres</li> </ul>



PSYCHOLOGICAL  
SUPPORT SERVICES

## How to refer to PSS

All referrals and reviews must come through CESPHN Mental Health Central Intake team via:

- Preferred method is the online PSS referral form:  
[phncesws.redicase.com.au/#!/referral/create](https://phncesws.redicase.com.au/#!/referral/create)  
You can [watch the video](#) on how to complete an online PSS referral.
- HealthLink  
Healthlink ID: CESPHNMH

*Referrals will not be accepted via email or fax.*

## FAQ

### Are there any exclusions to accessing PSS?

- PSS is not a crisis service
- PSS is not accessible to individuals receiving psychological support provided by other organisations, including state and tertiary government services, disability support services or workers compensation
- Individuals better suited to a crisis or specialist domestic violence services
- Situations where more appropriate services exist
- Individuals involved in court or insurance matters
- PSS is not accessible to individuals currently accessing sessions under Better Access

### Is the program always open for referrals?

PSS is a limited funded service and may reach capacity during periods of high demand. The CESPHN mental health central intake team will contact you if your referral cannot be accepted during such circumstances.

## How do I know if a referral has been accepted or declined?

- Processing timeframes are generally within 7 business days, \*these timeframes are only a guide and may vary due to seasonal demands on the program
- Please ensure your current email address is provided on the referral form. An automated no-reply email notification will be sent to the referrer once the MHP accepts the referral
- Should a referral be declined communication will be provided by the CESPHN mental health triage team.

## Can I choose the PSS MHP?

You may select Registered PSS providers from the CESPHN service directory <https://connect.cesphn.org.au/ServiceDirectory>

*\*please be aware provider availability is variable, should the nominated MHP not be available the CESPHN mental health central intake & triage team will allocate another PSS MHP.*

## Can I change MHP?

All Requests to change MHP can be made by emailing CESPHN mental health central intake team on: [mentalhealth@cesphn.com.au](mailto:mentalhealth@cesphn.com.au) or by calling: 1300 170 554

## How do I know about my clients' progress?

- You may contact the treating PSS MHP at any time during their episode of care.
- The MHP will provide a progress report after every six sessions, at episode end or point of discharge or if individual did not engage.

## What Medicare item numbers can I bill?

The PSS referral form meets the minimum requirements for billing a Mental Health Treatment Plan (MHTP). There is no need to complete a separate MHTP.

- MBS item numbers: 2700, 2701, 2712, 2713, 2715 and 2717
- Child referral - MBS Item: 36 (20+ mins) / MBS Item: 44 (40+ mins)
- Psychiatrist - MBS 291, the range 293-370
- Consultant physician paediatricians - MBS 110 -133
- COVID-19 Telehealth MBS available until 30 June 2022
- Please [visit this link](#) for MBS online updated item numbers

## How does the SPS program work?

Referrals under Suicide Prevention Service (SPS) are for non-acute individuals who require short-term support. Clients will have access to 12 sessions within a two month period only during the period of increased suicide risk. Timeframe for SPS referral to MHP is approx. 72 hours with the initial service contact to be within 7 days.

*\*You will be notified if the SPS program is at capacity*

## Do I need to provide a MHTP?

- A GP Mental Health Treatment Plan (MHTP) is required for this service. The online referral form and Healthlink referral templates are compliant with the billing requirements for a GP MHTP.
- GPs DO NOT have to complete a MHTP in addition to the online referral form.

## How do you provide feedback?

Feedback is important to us and is part of our quality improvement process to ensure a positive experience in accessing the service. Complete external feedback form [https://cesphn.foliogrc.com/contracts/new?contract\\_template=12&token=CMxv7rm\\_x4C\\_nD3\\_MaE7](https://cesphn.foliogrc.com/contracts/new?contract_template=12&token=CMxv7rm_x4C_nD3_MaE7) or T: 1300 170 554.

\*Central and Eastern Sydney PHN is committed to providing you with the highest level of service and confidentiality, and this includes **protecting your privacy**. Central and Eastern Sydney PHN is bound by the *Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988* and the *Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000*, which outlines the principles concerning the protection of your personal information.

Central and Eastern Sydney PHN acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we work.