

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## New support service to treat anxiety and depression in Central and Eastern Sydney

Central and Eastern Sydney PHN will use more than \$270,000 of Commonwealth funding to commission a new, free, mental health service which will provide tailored support to more than 400 people throughout Central and Eastern Sydney living with anxiety and depression.

Following a competitive tender process, we have selected the Royal District Nursing Service to deliver NewAccess, an outcomes-driven coaching service that will ensure people get the right help, at the right time.

This service – developed by *beyondblue* – will begin from 1 July 2017 for an initial period of 12 months and can be adapted to meet the needs of the individual.

Trained coaches provide one-on-one support to people experiencing anxiety or mild depression over eight sessions, using guided self-help and goal setting approaches to assist them in their mental health recovery.

NewAccess fits within a stepped care system of mental health support and targets those who would not traditionally seek help. The service is also free, with no medical referral required. Previous trials of this program in other regions have found that on average two-thirds of people who participate in the program recover from their condition<sup>1</sup>.

The flexibility of this service will also benefit local residents, as the coaching can be provided either over the phone, via video-conferencing or face-to-face, depending on the person's specific needs and preferences.

Mental health is one of the four pillars of the Australian Government's Long Term National Health Plan. It is estimated that more than four million Australian adults experience mental ill-health each year and we are committed to developing new and innovative approaches to mental health care.

Central and Eastern Sydney PHN Chief Executive Officer, Dr Michael Moore said, "As part of the commissioning process, we have undertaken extensive research and community consultation to understand the specific mental health needs of our region. The Royal District Nursing Service clearly demonstrated the capacity and experience required to conduct the service in a way that best meets the needs of our community."

"We know that improving health and wellbeing outcomes for individuals living with mental illness is not a one-size-fits-all approach. The service gives individuals greater choice and control of their recovery by allowing them to choose a delivery method they feel most comfortable with, which promotes positive outcomes." continued Dr Moore.

For more information or to access the service contact the NewAccess national intake line on 1800 010 630.

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<sup>1</sup> Referenced as part of an evaluation of a previous trial on the *beyondblue* website: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/newaccess/background-to-newaccess>