



Thursday 1 December, 2016

Broken Hill premises secured for Far West NSW headspace operations

The Far West **headspace** youth mental health initiative is a step closer with lead delivery agency Flourish Australia signing a two-year lease to operate from a prominent location in Broken Hill.

headspace Broken Hill will operate from the former Water Board premises at 231 Blende Street.

Plans are being lodged with Broken Hill City Council ahead of a comprehensive site fit-out, enabling mental health specialists to provide the best services and supports for young people.

A Youth Reference Group has also been formed to provide ideas and guidance on how the service can best assist the region. Three members have been selected, and more local figures will be added in due course.

A comprehensive recruitment process is progressing to secure staff for the site, including a Clinical and Operations Manager.

Flourish Australia and seven other consortium members are meeting regularly to ensure that the **headspace** centre is delivered in the timeliest and most efficient manner.

The centre is on track to be opened in early 2017 with an official launch expected in February.

“It’s promising that we’ve secured a central and easily-accessible location to help local young people with their mental health concerns,” Flourish Australia CEO Pam Rutledge said.

“This is a critical part of the early-intervention philosophy – making sure that people can get the right help in the right place at the right time.

“Young people will be able to wander into the relaxed, friendly and discreet environment at any time and, with the help of trained professionals, embark on a recovery journey.

“A problem with too many young people - particularly in isolated rural areas - is that they don’t know how, where or when to reach out for help when they have mental health issues.

“That’s why the **headspace** initiative fills such an enormous gap in Broken Hill. It’s about making things as easy as possible for young people who need help.”

The \$1.6 million local **headspace** initiative, funded by the Western NSW Primary Health Network, brings together a range of tailor-made services for people aged from 12 to 25, including mental health and wellbeing support services, general medical support, vocational and educational services and alcohol and drug services.

headspace operates under a 'no wrong door' policy, meaning as many services as possible are offered to young people from one central location, under a one-stop-shop structure.

Six full-time equivalent staff will work from the Broken Hill centre, in addition to a range of other professionals from consortium organisations and private practitioners.

The consortium members and organisations that will bring skills and experience to the centre are:

- LifeLine Broken Hill
- Far West Local Health District
- Neami
- Mission Australia
- JobLinkPlus
- Maari Ma
- CentaCare

ACON will also provide assistance.

Young people wanting to make interim contact with Far West NSW **headspace** on behalf of themselves or someone else can email headspace.brokenhill@flourishaustralia.org.au.

There are currently 95 headspace centres across Australia. That number will reach 100 by early next year, with a further 10 opening by early 2019.

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About **headspace**

The primary focus of **headspace** is the mental health and wellbeing of young Australians. **headspace** helps 12-25 year olds going through a tough time through a national network of 95 **headspace** centres (soon to be 100) and online and telephone counselling services. **headspace** was established and funded by the Commonwealth Government of Australia in 2006. Visit headspace.org.au to find a **headspace** centre or access help.

Flourish Australia is a not-for-profit organisation providing mental health support programs, accommodation and hope for more than 4,000 people across 64 locations in New South Wales and south east Queensland. Advocating community-based assistance, it is a leading mental health support provider that has been in operation for more than 61 years. Visit www.flourishaustralia.org.au

The **Western NSW Primary Health Network** (WNSW PHN) is one of 31 Primary Health Networks across Australia established by the Australian Government to support frontline health services, including four headspace sites. Our focus is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of primary health care, ensuring people receive the right care in the right place at the right time. Visit www.wnswhn.org.au