
#BIGRURAL

Initiative Type

Model of Care

Service Improvement

Status

Deliver

Added

28 June 2019

Last updated

23 September 2020

URL

<https://cnxp3cuvtvrn68yjaibaht5ywrxspj7m.clinicalexcellence.qld.gov.au/improvement-exchange/bigrural>

Summary

#BIGRURAL is a youth focused health service linking existing services and strengthening community capacity. The service allows for a rapid response to vulnerable young people as well as improving

health literacy including about suicide. The wide range of “pop up” and outreach engagement opportunities is proving effective in supporting dispersed populations of young people.

Key dates

Mar 2019

Implementation sites

This service model is based in Emerald but provides services across the Central Highlands.

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Aim

To improve the health (including mental health) of young people in the Central Highlands Region.

Benefits

- Increased access and responsiveness to young people and their health issues within the Central Highlands Region.
- A community owned and controlled youth health service that is able to respond quickly to emerging issues.
- A platform to encourage local pride in our young people allowing many different engagement strategies and processes.

Background

In 2017 and early 2018 a number of youth suicides focused the Central Highlands communities on the health and wellbeing of their young people. The impact of these deaths in the community was exacerbated by workforce shortages and service fragmentation. Furthermore outreach services from Rockhampton and coastal communities which had been funded on Central Highlands identified needs failed to respond. A community meeting decided on a two pronged approach to improve the service access for young people in the rural and remote communities in the Central Highlands. One group began the research and created momentum to establish a Headspace service in Emerald. Funding for a satellite service was announced in the lead up to the recent federal election. The second group lead by Central Highlands Healthcare created a youth facing health and community engagement service as part of its primary healthcare practice with outreach capacity across the Central Highlands. Central Highlands Health is a charitable organisation with DGR status with the Australian Taxation. As well as with existing service providers such as CQHHS and Anglicare, #BIGRURAL has developed formal partnerships with Central Highlands Rugby League, The Emerald Academy of Dance, onPsych telehealth psychology; the Emerald Interact and Rotary Clubs; Coaltrain employment services; the Central Highlands Regional Council; TRUE; PCYC, the CQU, the Emerald Neighbourhood Centre. #BIGRURAL is supported by funding from the Better Healthcare Foundation and has strong relationships with the local schools and the Ag College.

Solutions Implemented

Along with the Headspace project, #BIGRURAL has enhanced local service capacity and responsiveness to young people at risk. Since the service launch there have been several presentations including GPs and nurses and the youth advisory committee in surrounding communities and 8 young people have accessed the service more formally. The Post bereavement support group has also been established.

Evaluation and Results

The project has not been established long enough to warrant a formal evaluation. The partnership with Central Queensland University is planning on conducting a formal evaluation in March 2020. Each service referral is monitored in terms of range of supports offered and with the consent of the client, information is shared about successes and vulnerabilities.

Lessons Learnt

- Formal and informal youth and community participation is essential.
- A wide range of activities must be used to engage the community.
- General Practitioners must lead a comprehensive multidisciplinary service model which includes allied health professionals.

References

[YIRS One Stop Youth Shop](#) - is a local youth support service which supports young people between 8 – 21 years who may need information, support, advice or assistance around something or anything that is of concern. [Grapevine Group Assoc Inc](#) - a locally founded grassroots volunteer group who raise funds and awareness for suicide prevention in the Mackay region. [Australian Healthcare Associates Youth Engagement on the ACT](#): exploring integrated service delivery for young people through structured youth centres and youth participation - June 2013

Further Reading

[Emerald Medical Group](#)

Resources

[BIGRURAL Services Brochure](#)

