

31 August 2018

Senate

Community Affairs References Committee

Accessibility and quality of mental health services in rural and remote Australia

Response to 9 July 2018 Senate hearing, Katherine, NT

Background

Anglicare NT was selected by the NT PHN as lead agency for the new headspace Katherine service. Anglicare NT is one of the largest providers of government-funded welfare, social justice and community development services in the Northern Territory. Anglicare NT has a strong history delivering psychosocial services in the community. Since 2007, the organisation has been the lead agency for the headspace Darwin service.

headspace Katherine aims to be a highly accessible, youth friendly and integrated service that responds to mild to moderate mental health, general health, alcohol and other drug and the vocational concerns of young people 12 to 25 years of age. headspace Katherine aims to provide specialist mental health treatment as well as improving mental health outcomes by reducing help-seeking barriers and facilitating early access to services that meet the holistic needs of young people.

Anglicare NT is committed to this journey and is excited by the opportunity to expand our headspace services into the Katherine region.

Timeline

After receiving notification of Anglicare NT's successful appointment as lead agency of headspace Katherine in March 2018, preparations for the planning and implementation commenced. A headspace Katherine Senior Project Officer was appointed in April and the Senior Clinician commenced in May. Other elements, including recruitment of a Centre Manager continue. Anglicare NT is currently finalising negotiations for our preferred location for the centre. These negotiations are critical to the success of headspace operations.

The headspace Katherine Implementation Committee was established in April and has been actively meeting monthly since this time. This Committee is in place to oversee initial operations and provide direction on design and implementation of the centre. The Committee comprises of members from Wurli-Wurlinjang Aboriginal Health Service, headspace National, NT PHN, as well as several local youth and Elder representatives. In the longer term, headspace Katherine operations will be led by a community Consortium and two reference groups, including an Elders Reference Group (co-chaired by Wurli Wurlinjang) and a Youth Reference Group. There has been a multitude of services demonstrating interest in the Consortium establishment and they are likely to join when it becomes active upon service commencement.

A scoping project (led by NT Mental Health Coalition) is also in progress. The project is focusing on opportunities for community engagement/consultation and service design, as well as the viability of regular outreach services to communities.

Implementation remains on track for the service to be operational before the end of the year.

Funding Overview

As with all other headspace services across Australia, Anglicare NT is funded \$850,000 annually to deliver the mental health service. This includes six salaried staff and a range of additional consultative services. Anglicare NT makes substantial in-kind contributions in order to improve the viability of the service; this is largely in the form of reduced program management (HR, finance etc.) fees.

Funds are only utilised for the operation of the headspace Centre in accordance with the program specifications. Anglicare NT are required to provide regular financial and program reports to the NT PHN on our progress towards implementing this new headspace service. These reports are key to demonstrating the planning and progress towards a set of defined deliverables.

Anglicare NT warmly welcomes interest in headspace Katherine; we are passionate about achieving good mental health outcomes for young people in the Northern Territory. Furthermore, Anglicare NT is committed to ensuring all appropriate due diligence has been completed prior to making any public announcements about opening dates or service delivery.

Kind Regards,

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Anglicare NT