

QUEENSLAND HEALTH BRIEF FOR NOTING

Our Ref: BR045554
Date: 18 June 2010
TO Parliamentary Secretary for Healthy Living
FROM Chief Health Officer, Division of the Chief Health Officer
SUBJECT Development of a youth mental health policy for Queensland
Requested by Office of the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That you note the contents of this brief.

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

- In the brief for an opening address that you delivered at a youth mental health forum on 18 May 2010 (BR045344 – Attachment 1), a number of youth-relevant mental health initiatives were listed, including the planned development of a youth mental health policy for Queensland. Further information has been requested regarding the policy.
- Youth mental health policies and frameworks targeting the needs of adolescents and young adults are uncommon, both nationally and internationally. The World Health Organisation identifies a global need for such policies to guide the evolution of mental health services.
- A contemporary policy is required to assist Queensland Health (QH) to address the unique issues facing adolescents and young adults experiencing mental health problems. This is particularly important given the high prevalence of mental health problems in young people; the need for early and effective intervention to prevent severe long-term impact on functioning; and the split structure of the mental health service system along the age continuum.
- The *Queensland Plan for Mental Health 2007-2017* (QPMH) includes provisions for enhancing capacity to provide comprehensive mental health care for young people aged 15-25 years. A multi-systemic approach is being employed, with cross-sector initiatives targeting prevention and early intervention in addition to enhanced specialist mental health care.
- Early Psychosis (EP) services provide a specific example of youth mental health service delivery in Queensland. EP services are gradually being developed by QH mental health services across the State to improve early detection and access to evidence-based early intervention for young people aged 15-24 years, experiencing an EP. EP service delivery involves collaboration between QH child and youth mental health services and adult mental health services, in addition to engagement with other youth service providers.
- QH recognises that meeting the mental health needs of young people requires a collaborative effort across government and non-government sectors, with a focus on removing barriers to care and increasing the engagement of young people, carers, families and peers in mental health care planning and delivery.

ISSUES

- The QPMH is a whole-of-government plan addressing the full age spectrum and continuum of care. While adolescents and young adults are clearly identified as a priority group, the identified actions and outcomes in relation to this group are very broad.
- The QH youth mental health policy will provide necessary specific guidance in relation to what QH mental health services will achieve to improve mental health outcomes for young people aged 15-25 years. The policy will assist in bridging the gap between QH Child and Youth Mental Health Services and Adult Mental Health Services, facilitate the provision of evidence-based and developmentally appropriate assessment and treatment practices, and encourage collaboration with government and non-government key stakeholders across health and other sectors.
- Development of the QH youth mental health policy will commence in the second half of 2010, with anticipated completion in late 2011.
- The policy will build on the Queensland Government's 1996 Policy Statement *Future Directions for Child and Youth Mental Health Services*. The policy will be guided by more recent State, National and international policies and papers that target mental health issues and associated issues for young people. These include but are not limited to the QPMH, the Fourth National Mental Health Plan, the *National Mental Health Policy 2008*, and the *Headspace* integrated health service centre model of the National Youth Mental Health Foundation.
- Key underlying principles of the policy will include promoting resilience and recovery, enhancing early detection and intervention, improving continuity of care, enhancing the flexibility of care, and ensuring the engagement of young people, families, carers, peers and other service providers in mental health care planning and delivery.
- The Queensland Mental Health Reform Committee, on which the Department of the Premier and Cabinet is represented, will be involved in consultation on the development of the policy.
- The project has the support of the Executive Director, Mental Health Directorate. Project governance for the development of the policy is yet to be finalised, and will determine endorsement requirements. Formal endorsement of the project plan will be sought once governance has been finalised.

CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- Development of the policy will involve extensive Statewide consultation with key stakeholders.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- The implementation of the policy will be achieved within the current funding targets for the QPMH.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Copy of BR045344

NOTED or APPROVED / NOT APPROVED Parliamentary Secretary for Healthy Living Comments		
_____ Murray Watt Parliamentary Secretary for Healthy Living / /	Principal/Senior Policy Advisor / /	Policy Advisor / /

Political Representatives

Local Government

- Statewide application

State Government

- Statewide application

Federal Government

- Statewide application

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Cleared by: Angelique Hornsby obo Dr Jeannette Young Chief Health Officer _____ Signed on: 24 June 2010	Endorsed: Michael Reid Director-General _____ / /