

HOMELESS YOUTH DUAL DIAGNOSIS INITIATIVE REPORT

The Northern Homeless Youth Dual Diagnosis Initiative (HYDDI) provides a Specialist Practitioner who delivers support to a number of our Hope Street programs through a partnership with NorthWestern Area Mental Health. Co-located at Hope Street, the practitioner assists with consultations for our young people regarding drug and alcohol and mental health issues, is available for secondary consultations with staff, and offers training and professional development on clients with complex needs.

Client Support Provided

During 2017-2018, the Northern HYDDI Specialist Practitioner:

- Conducted 164 instances of direct clinical work with young people;
- Provided co-case management to 27 young people;
- Provided 139 secondary consultations to workers within the sector, and
- Conducted 222 formal and informal education sessions for workers.

This work was conducted alongside workers from the following agencies and sites:

- Hope Street Youth and Family Services (West Brunswick refuge, Brunswick Town Hall, Melton and Whittlesea Youth Foyer-like programs, BOOST outreach, Youth Reconciliation Program);
- Melbourne City Mission (Stopover, Vicky's Place, WRAP, and Iramoo youth refuges, Ladder and Precinct transitional programs, Frontyard);
- Merri Outreach Support Service (Catchment youth refuge).

Training and Development

This year saw a large increase in the training and development undertaken as part of HYDDI's role. Most of these sessions were conducted at agency sites and focused on responding to challenging behaviours, formation and maintenance of therapeutic relationships, and responding to trauma-driven behaviours. In conjunction with the Western HYDDI Specialist Practitioner, several educational sessions were conducted at the Royal Melbourne Hospital for practitioners across the network.

Within the wider sector, the HYDDI Specialist Practitioner continued to be an active member of the Building Up Dual Diagnosis in Youth Services (BUDDYS) committee which is made up of dual diagnosis clinicians from mental health services across Victoria and is part of the Victorian Dual Diagnosis Initiative. In 2017 the BUDDYS committee ran the Annual BUDDYS expo which focused on the emergence of new initiatives to support young people who have co-occurring dual diagnosis issues.

Primary and Secondary Consultations

Throughout the 2017-2018 year, a number of focused consultations were provided by the Northern HYDDI Specialist Practitioner, primarily to answer specific questions relating to issues around co-occurring problems from mental health and alcohol and other drug issues. All of these consultations occurred together with the person's key workers.

The Northern HYDDI Specialist Practitioner also began to undertake long-term therapeutic work in conjunction with the Hope Street Youth Reconciliation Practitioner over a one to two year timeframe. This aims to support young people who are engaged with Specialist Homelessness Services agencies and have particularly complex needs that cannot be adequately supported by primary care systems and who do not meet criteria for receiving support from tertiary care systems. The long term support aims to address the complex barriers that have prevented young people from retaining accommodation and linkages with their communities.

Research

In late 2017 the Northern HYDDI Specialist Practitioner commenced a long-term research project with Hope Street, Melbourne City Mission, and the University of Melbourne. The research project will run over several years and aims to engage young people who have or are experiencing homelessness in a co-produced project to identify and examine the factors that support young people to exit homelessness and maintain stable accommodation.

The Northern HYDDI Specialist Practitioner looks forward to an ongoing productive relationship with Hope Street Youth and Family Services. This relationship will continue to support Hope Street in providing a high level of support to young people who are experiencing homelessness across the northern and western suburbs of Melbourne.



Brendan Pearl
Northern Homeless Youth Dual
Diagnosis Initiative Specialist
Practitioner

"YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE
YOU'RE IN A 'PROGRAM',
THEY TREAT YOU LIKE
YOU'RE A PERSON."

Initiative Overview

The Northern Homeless Youth Dual Diagnosis Initiative (HYDDI) is a Department of Health and Human Services Youth Homelessness initiative implemented through a partnership between Hope Street and the NorthWestern Mental Health (NWMH), the mental health arm of Melbourne Health. A HYDDI Practitioner is employed by NWMH's Substance Use and Mental Illness Treatment Team (SUMITT) and is co-located at Hope Street.

Northern HYDDI focuses on developing the knowledge and abilities of youth Specialist Homelessness Services workers in the north of Melbourne, including Hope Street workers, to identify and respond with early intervention to the complex needs of young people experiencing homelessness. The initiative fosters ongoing partnerships between mental health, drug and alcohol and youth homelessness services and provides:

- Primary consultation offering a confidential specialist mental health and substance use assessment, with the case manager present to promote capacity building;
- Secondary consultation advising case managers on brief interventions and strategies, information on referral for specialist treatment, services coordination and clinical problem solving;
- Individual and group support for case managers on working with clients with a dual diagnosis;
- Short term co-case management of clients with an emerging or current complex needs or dual diagnosis;
- Training and development.

"IT IS STILL ONE OF THE BEST THINGS THAT HAPPENED TO ME TO BE HONEST WITH YOU".