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About Mental Health

This guide is for professionals who wish to refer an infant, child, or young person. The Royal Children’s Hospital (RCH) Mental Health has a breadth of specialised services for inpatients of the hospital as well as outpatients. Consultation and training are also available.

Mental Health provides a range of direct mental health services for children and young people aged 0-15 years and their families who live in the Western and North-Western Melbourne Metropolitan regions. It is generally free of charge and is a voluntary service.

Choice, partnership and participation by young people and their families/carers are central to all elements of service planning and delivery. In addition to our direct clinical work we support organisations working with children, young people and families through:

- Information and advice on mental health issues and resources
- Consultation to service providers
- Training and education activities
- Partnering with services to improve integration of the service system
- Participating in care team and collaborative approaches with other agencies to facilitate integrated service delivery.

We believe in better mental health and wellbeing for everyone!

Who works at the service?

Mental Health is interdisciplinary and includes mental health professionals with extensive child, youth and family expertise. These include:

- child and adolescent psychiatrists
- child psychotherapists
- family therapists
- nurses
- occupational therapists
- paediatricians
- psychologists
- speech pathologists
- social workers
- trainees in a number of these professional disciplines.

What services and programs do we offer?

Mental Health provides a broad range of consultation, assessment and treatment services including individual and family therapies, specialist assessments and inpatient treatment. Consultation and education is also available for staff in a range of agencies.

STATEWIDE: • Child and Family Psychology Clinic • Developmental Neuropsychiatry • Eating Disorders
- Gender Dysphoria • Neuropsychology • Psychology

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Intake

Mental Health Intake (Triage) Team is a telephone-based service. It is the central contact point for mental health outpatient referrals and enquiries to the mental health service. The Intake Team is made up of professional mental health clinicians who offer:

- consultation about referrals
- information about other child and youth mental health services
- an initial appointment with a mental health clinician, if appropriate
- education and information/training sessions for referrers.

When to refer?

Initially, children, young people and their families generally receive assistance with mental health problems from local services in their community. These include general practitioners, school counsellors, community health centres, headspace and many others. Mental Health can help when problems have persisted or have not been resolved. If you feel the young person can no longer be managed by primary or secondary care providers, a referral can be made to this service.

Referral concerns

We are commissioned to cater to the needs of children and young people with severe, complex and often persistent mental disorders including but not exclusively:

- anxiety disorders
- attachment disorders
- childhood schizophrenia
- developmental disorders
- disruptive behaviour disorders
- eating disorders
- mood disorders
- somatoform disorders
- stress and trauma.

Relationship problems

Significant social withdrawal, family conflict, poor peer relationships

Developmental problems

Poor social skills, learning difficulties, attention and/or concentration difficulties, unusual play behaviours

General health and wellbeing problems

Eating disorders, severely disturbed sleeping patterns, poor self-care, self-injury, physical symptoms caused by emotional distress

Referral process

To discuss the suitability of a referral contact the Mental Health Intake (Triage) Team between 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) on 1800 44 55 11 (free call).

Outside these hours, you can leave telephone messages of a non-urgent nature.

For urgent enquiries, please call 000 for an ambulance and send the child or young person with a parent/carer to their closest Emergency Department.

Families/carers are given a choice of available appointments where possible. They will be sent an information pack about the service, including a letter confirming their appointment time and some forms they will need to complete and return. You will be notified the outcome of the referral.

What happens next?

Significant symptoms

The following symptoms might lead you to consider making a referral.

**Severe psychological problems**

Hallucinations, delusions, seeming to be out of touch with reality, paranoia, habitual and obsessive behaviour

**Behavioural problems**

School refusal, poor self-control, behaviour dangerous to themselves or others, lying, stealing, aggressive behaviour

**Persistent emotional problems**

Severe stress reactions, anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts

**How to make a referral**

Download a referral form from the Mental Health website www.rch.org.au/mental-health for you to complete and return. Please obtain consent from the family prior to making this referral. A letter will then be sent to the parent(s)/carer(s) requesting them to contact the Intake Team to discuss making an appropriate appointment.

**What happens next?**

The Intake Team determines whether a person will receive further assessment by specialist mental health services (and, if required, the type and urgency of the response) by referring to the Mental Health Triage Scale (www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth).
WAITING TIMES
Appointments are made based on urgency and it is important to inform the Intake Clinician if a more urgent response is needed. There can sometimes be a wait for the next available appointment in some teams. You will be advised of this when you contact the service.

If the referral is not accepted
If after speaking with the parent/legal guardian the referral is not accepted the family will be given a referral to or information about, other services that are more appropriate. As the original referrer, you will be notified of this outcome.

OUTPATIENT SERVICES
T: 1800 44 55 11 (free call)
Ring Mental Health Intake (Triage) Team for:
• Community Mental Health Teams
• General queries
• Hospital Consultation-Liaison Team
• Infant Mental Health Team
• Requests for primary or secondary consultations.

Young people (0–15 years) and their families might attend one of our community teams for an initial consultation. Most families are offered a Pathways Session. This session is conducted with two clinicians and the family. It involves pre-session contact with the family, a two hour appointment and post-session phone call. During the session, the aim is to focus on the family’s priority of the most pressing concern. As with traditional assessments, risk issues take precedence. At the post-session phone call, a decision is made as to whether further ongoing appointments would be helpful for the young person’s recovery.

INPATIENT SERVICE (BANKSIA)
T: 03 9345 9600
Banksia provides assessment and treatment for young people (12–18 years) who require more assistance than can be offered in an outpatient setting.

Urgent after hours referrals without a specialist mental health assessment are managed through the RCH Emergency department 03 9345 6153.

INFANT MENTAL HEALTH
T: 1800 44 55 11 (free call)
A specialist infant mental health team sees infants and pre-schoolers (0–4 years) experiencing a range of difficulties that may be impacting on their emotional wellbeing and development. There are regular professional development opportunities that are facilitated by the team in infant mental health, and secondary consultations may also be available on request.

INTENSIVE MOBILE YOUTH OUTREACH SERVICE (IMYOS)
This team works with young people already referred to Mental Health. They work in an outreach way (including frequent visits in the community to young peoples’ homes, residential units, schools and community centres) when young people have significant difficulty engaging with a clinic-based service and have serious mental illness that needs intensive support.

SPECIALIST AUTISM ASSESSMENT TEAM
T: 03 9345 4026 F: 03 9345 6002
This is a specialist assessment service for children (0–15 years) who may have Autism Spectrum Disorder or related developmental problems. These children may have difficulties in speech and language development, play and social interaction. Many children with these difficulties can be diagnosed within the community, with only those who are complex for one reason or another requiring an assessment from this team. A referral from a paediatrician is required.

CASEA
T: 03 9345 4877
CAMHS and Schools Early Action Program (CASEA) is an early intervention service for young children in Prep to Year 3 with challenging behaviours and emerging conduct disorder. This comprehensive school based program works with parents and schools to help these children improve their behaviours early in life and make the most of their opportunities in the future. The program runs in public and Catholic schools.

EATING DISORDER PROGRAM
T: 03 9345 6533
In collaboration with the Centre for Adolescent Health, this program provides an integrated, interdisciplinary assessment and intervention for young people (12–18 years) and their families aged with eating disorders. Discussion around younger ages is available. A referral from a medical practitioner is required the access the program.

DEVELOPMENTAL NEUROPSYCHIATRY (DNP)
T: 03 9345 4666
Specialist multidisciplinary assessment is provided for children (0–15 years) and their families with delays/impairments in several areas of development with associated emotional, social and behavioural problems. This service focuses on more complex presentations and unclear diagnoses.

PSYCHOLOGY AND NEUROPSYCHOLOGY SERVICE
Psychology T: 03 9345 5780
Neuropsychology T: 013 9345 5373
The RCH Psychology Service offer clinical psychology and
neuropsychology services for young people (0–18 years) living across Victoria. Clinical psychologists and neuropsychologists are trained to comprehensively assess children’s behaviour, emotional state and cognitive functioning within a developmental framework and family context.

CHILD AND FAMILY PSYCHOLOGY CLINIC
T: 03 9345 5917
This clinic is a statewide fee-for-service clinic for young people (0–18 years) that provides specialist clinical psychology assessment and treatment for a range of issues including behavioural, social, emotional and learning problems. The clinic provides clinical psychology assessment and therapy, as well as comprehensive learning, educational, neuropsychological, cognitive and Autism Spectrum Disorder assessments.

GENDER DYSPHORIA SERVICE
T: 03 9345 5890
In collaboration with the Centre for Adolescent Health, this program provides young people (up to 18 years) with integrated, interdisciplinary assessment, treatment and support with concerns regarding their gender identity. The program provides a co-ordinated psychiatric and medical service to young people and their families. A referral from a medical practitioner is required the access the program.

HOSPITAL CONSULTATION
– LIAISON TEAM
T: 1800 44 55 1 (free call)
Young people (0–18 years) and their families may be referred to the Hospital Consultation-Liaison Team while they are in hospital receiving other medical investigations or treatment. The team works with the young person, family and medical team to find out if there is a mental health difficulty and how they can help. As with traditional assessments, risk issues take precedence. It is possible that the child or adolescent may be referred to other teams within Mental Health, another mental health service for young people or agencies in the community to assist the family through further appointments.

PSYCHIATRY CLINIC
T: 03 9345 6180  F: 03 9345 5034
The Psychiatry Clinic provides psychiatric care to children and adolescents (up to 18 years) who present co-morbid mental health problems and physical health problems, are being treated at the RCH and may not meet entry criteria for public mental health services. The clinic is staffed by psychiatrists, with experience in working with children and young people with co-morbid physical illnesses and disabilities. The clinic offers assessment and short to medium-term treatment of these problems, with consultation to referring paediatricians.

TRAVANCORE SCHOOL
T: 03 9345 6053
Travancore School is a Department of Education and Training (DET) school that supports students undergoing treatment for mental illness in the Western and Northern metropolitan regions of Melbourne. The School works in partnership with Mental Health and Orygen Youth Health. The primary educational focus of all programs is to ensure student engagement with education and transition to community based settings where applicable. Teachers offer comprehensive classroom based learning, outreach support to students in educational settings and individual pathway plans. The school also builds the capacity of teachers and other staff to assist students with mental health issues.

PRIMARY/SECONDARY CONSULTATION
T: 1800 44 55 11 (free call)
Consultations can be provided to professionals and agencies regarding general issues or individual cases. Regular consultation to an agency can also be arranged.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND TRAINING
oyh.org.au/training-resources/training-our-local-community-sector
This is a collaborative training program run together with Orygen Youth Health and headspace.

INTERpreter SERVICE
T: 03 9345 5026
An interpreter can be arranged for families to assist in completing an assessment and for appointments. Please advise if this service is required.

KOORI CLIENTS
T: 03 9345 6011
Mental Health has a Koori Social and Emotional Wellbeing Officer who can assist Koori families. Their role is to make sure we offer a safe cultural space for families to discuss their child’s recovery.

CONSUMER CONSULTANT
T: 03 9345 6011
Our Consumer Consultant works with service users, staff and community to maintain and develop our participation initiatives.

RESEARCH AND TRAINING/OTHER PROJECTS/PROGRAMS
T: 1800 44 55 11 (free call)

QUICKLINKS
Mental Health website
www.rch.org.au/mental-health
Victorian Department of Health and Human Services