What is experience based co-design?
Experience based co-design (EBCD) enables clients and carers that have used services to consider and improve the model of care. It uses interviews and focus groups to gather information and then brings clients, carers and staff together to explore the findings and provide recommendations.

What is this EBCD project?
The University of Melbourne will work with Murray PHN to explore client’s experiences of living with severe mental illness and their support by primary mental health services. The project will gather the views of clients, carers and other stakeholders on the key elements of a model of care with a focus on recovery – suited to this client group’s needs – that can guide the commissioning of services for people living with severe mental illnesses in the future.

What are the objectives of this project?
1. To conduct a genuine experience based co-design of services for people with a severe mental illness in each region of Murray PHN to inform place-based design.
2. Evaluation of the current Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program (MHNIP) experience from a lived experience, provider and stakeholder perspective.
3. Key recommendations for a recovery focussed model of care including a focus on that will guide commissioning of future services for severe mental illness.
4. Evaluation of Albury Wodonga Health’s integrated mental health service model that informs co-design.
5. Consideration of service needs across all three areas of severe mental illness.

Who is the project target client group?
The National Mental Health Commission describes severe mental illness as complex and chronic conditions such as severe depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and eating disorders, as well as severe and persistent psychosocial disability, including those with complex multi-agency needs. Severe mental illness accounts for approximately 3.1 per cent of the population.

This population can be classified broadly into three groups:
- severe episodic (about two-thirds of the overall severe population)
- severe and persistent (about one-third of the overall severe population)
- severe and persistent illness with complex multi-agency needs. This is a relatively small group (approximately 0.4 per cent of the adult population) and is likely to be the focus of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Tier 3 individual support packages.
What are primary mental health services?
Primary care or primary health is provided in the community for people making an initial approach to a medical practitioner or clinic for advice or treatment. Primary health is often the first point of contact people have with a health system. Primary mental health services include general practitioner (GPs), psychiatrist, community health services or a mental health professional working in collaboration with a general practice. GPs have a central role in providing assessment, treatment and referral to other services for their clients. Primary mental health services are generally funded by the Commonwealth.

Primary mental health services are not: based in hospitals, an emergency response or psychosocial support services.

What are primary mental health services for people living with severe mental illness?
Primary Health Networks (PHNs) have been funded to develop and commissioned primary mental health services for people living with severe mental illness who can be appropriately managed in the primary care setting.

Murray PHN currently fund community-based general practices, private psychiatric practices and other appropriate organisations (e.g. Aboriginal Medical Services) through the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program (MHNIP) that was established in 2007. MHNIP uses credentialed mental health nurses (CMHNs) to provide coordinated, clinical care for clients living with severe and enduring mental health disorders. Mental health nurses must work with psychiatrists and general practitioners to provide services including: monitoring a patient's mental state; managing their medication, and improving links with other health professionals and clinical service providers.

Other primary mental health services such as psychological therapy services or Partners in Recovery may also be used by people living with severe mental illness.

Who is involved in this project?
Murray PHN and the University of Melbourne will work with clients, carers, MHNIP providers and other mental health stakeholders to design services that are accessible, targeted, evidence based and shaped by the people who use these services.

Who is the University of Melbourne, Division of General Practice?
The University of Melbourne
Established in 1853, the University of Melbourne is a public-spirited institution that makes distinctive contributions to society in research, learning and teaching and engagement. It is consistently ranked among the leading universities in the world, with international rankings of world universities placing it as number 1 in Australia and consistently in the top 50 universities in the world.
The University of Melbourne has 10 discipline-based faculties, and is affiliated with many independent medical research institutes, teaching hospitals and other institutions. The University is also a leader in cultural, environmental, medical, scientific, legal and social research.
The Department of General Practice
The Department of General Practice was established within the School of Medicine in 2001 to focus on clinical and health services training and research in the primary care setting. The Department provides teaching and learning opportunities to GPs at all stages of their careers ranging from undergraduate medical students to vocational trainees, practicing clinicians, emerging researchers and experienced academics across metropolitan, regional and rural settings. The Department delivers training to practice nurses and short courses across qualitative and quantitative research methods, family violence and survey design.

The Department is also home to the Primary Care Research Unit (PCRU), a centre of excellence in primary care research, research training and knowledge exchange with established programs in mental health, youth health, family violence, primary care cancer and cardio metabolic diseases.

What are the timelines?
This project will begin at the end of April until the end of July 2017. This relatively short timeframe is unfortunate but necessary to meet future service design timelines. We appreciate your timely assistance, especially in recruiting clients and carers given these tight timeframes.

Who should I contact regarding the co-design project?
For more details or to get involved in the co-design project please contact a University of Melbourne research team member

t: 1800 431 212 or e: codesign-MPHN@unimelb.edu.au or go to murrayphn.org.au/co-design.

Who should I contact regarding Murray PHN and the MHNIP services?
For more information regarding primary mental health services and MHNIP services in your area contact your local Murray PHN office: murrayphn.org.au/contact