

MEDIA RELEASE

\$3m general practice investment in the Murray PHN region

31 July 2019

Murray PHN has awarded contracts valued at a total of \$3 million to support local general practitioners working on new models of care to improve the health of their communities.

Innovative projects to be funded include a child mental health program in Euroa, “hospice in the home” palliative care services in Indigo Shire, home and clinic-based care coordination programs for people with chronic disease in Inglewood, and a nurse-led alcohol screening and intervention program in Mildura.

Murray PHN Executive Director Integration, Penny Wilkinson said the contracted projects would help provide primary health services where they were most needed, while strengthening the region’s capability in priority health areas.

“This investment is about local models of care designed and delivered by general practice,” she said. “We have been delighted with the response to this grant program, which has generated many thoughtful projects for collaboration now and in the future,” she said.

The contracts provide 12-month funding grants to develop local models of care in four areas of the greatest need. They are:

- Care coordination services for patients with chronic illness
- Rostered after-hours GP networks
- Low intensity mental health services for children
- Alcohol screening and brief intervention programs

Murray PHN CEO Matt Jones said general practice was at the heart of patient care in the primary health setting, particularly in rural and regional areas.

“In 2018-19, Murray PHN issued more than 165 contracts to health services and organisations across our catchment,” he said. “The value of all contracts was more than \$26.5 million, with \$10.5 million being new activity in psychosocial support, suicide prevention and within general practice,” he said.

“Our initial areas of investment have been chosen to target major issues within our region. Future funding will be directed to address these and other areas of health priority in our region. Our overarching goal is to use quality improvement activities to support general practice, according to their needs and capacity.”

In addition to funding for commissioned services, Murray PHN provides a structured General Practice Support Program, which partners with general practices on practice quality and business sustainability.

This activity is supported by funding from the Australian Government through the PHN Program.

For further information on Murray PHN's General Practice Investment Strategy:

www.murrayphn.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/GP0001_GP-investment-strategy_2019_booklet_digital.pdf

To request an interview, contact:

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Background information:

North East

Indigo Family Medical Clinic

To establish a "hospice in the home" program suitable for private practice. Deliver and implement gold standard care to those choosing to die at home, with a triage and rostering system to ensure that staff are readily available 24hrs 7 days per week. Dying with dignity at home.

North West

Sunraysia Community Health

Develop a sustainable model of nurse-led alcohol screening and brief intervention model of care; encouraging and strengthening partnerships with interested GP practices in the region

Central Victoria

Marong Medical Practice and Inglewood

Care coordination services for patients with chronic illness, based on clinic, home visits or aged care visits by a suitably qualified nurse. Working with the patient's GP and relevant allied health to improve care of people in ill health.

Goulburn Valley

Euroa Medical Family Practice

To provide mental health services to primary schools and kinder/pre-schools within the Euroa community. This will target disadvantaged families, but also support all children within the pre-school and education environment.