

DRAFT MEDIA RELEASE

ERH to lead headspace Echuca service

Thursday 2 July 2020

Murray PHN today announced that Echuca Regional Health would oversee the running of the upcoming headspace Echuca centre, after a robust tender process.

headspace Echuca is a new addition to the existing network of five headspace centres across the Murray PHN region that are located in Albury, Bendigo, Swan Hill, Shepparton and Mildura. A new headspace satellite service is also currently being established in Wangaratta.

Matt Jones, CEO of Murray PHN, said that around one in five young Australians aged 16-25 experience mental illness in any given year. In the past two years, almost 6,300 young people had accessed nearly 34,000 occasions of service at existing headspace centres in the Murray PHN catchment.

“We are pleased to announce that a local organisation, Echuca Regional Health, will be Lead Agency for the new headspace Echuca service,” Mr Jones said.

“Echuca Regional Health has strong links to other services in the Campaspe and southern NSW region and as the Lead Agency for headspace Echuca, will be supported by a large consortium of local organisations dedicated to providing youth mental health services on both sides of the Victorian and NSW border.”

With a focus on early intervention, headspace provides young people and their families with support at a crucial time in their lives – to help get them back on track and strengthen their ability to manage their mental health in future.

The new headspace centre for Echuca was announced last year by Federal Member for Nicholls, Damian Drum.

Mr Drum said Federal Government funding of \$2.6 million had been allocated to establish headspace Echuca and cover initial service delivery up until June 2020.

“I’m pleased young people living in the area are able to not only access these important services closer to home, but also provide input into the physical design and layout of the centre,” he said.

“In coming months, young people aged 12-25 who are living in Echuca and surrounding areas will be able to have their say to ensure services are established to meet the needs of the local community.”

Echuca Regional Health’s CEO, Nick Bush, said the consultation process aligned with the nationally recognised headspace model to deliver a tailored service that young people want.

“Young people will help determine key features of the centre’s establishment, such as location and importantly how to access services,” he said. “We’re excited to move into the next phase and encourage young passionate people to get involved.”

headspace Echuca will offer support in four core streams including mental health, physical/ sexual health, vocational (work, school and study), and alcohol and other drugs.

Jason Trethowan, CEO at headspace, said his team looks forward to working with Echuca Regional Health to get the new centre up and running.

“We know with the right support we can help young people get through tough times and get back on track. It’s been a particularly tough time for young people recently and it’s great that headspace, a service trusted by young people, will be able to provide further support to the local community in Echuca,” Mr Trethowan said.

“The timeline for centre and services establishment will depend on the feedback from young people across the region”, Cynthia Opie, Executive Director of Community Services at Echuca Regional Health said.

Young people who would like to be involved in headspace Echuca establishment process can register their interest by contacting Cynthia on 0409 945 588 or by emailing copie@erh.org.au

Until the new centre is open, young people needing support are encouraged to speak to their local GP or visit the headspace website headspace.org.au for support and useful tips.

Young people across the Murray PHN catchment will also benefit from a recent Commonwealth Government funding boost of almost half a million dollars through the headspace Capital Enhancement and Demand Management program. Almost half a million dollars was secured for headspace Albury Wodonga, Bendigo and Shepparton.

- headspace Albury Wodonga will receive funding for renovations to build GP treatment rooms and to aid the community’s bushfire recovery.
- headspace Shepparton has been allocated funding to support workforce development.
- headspace Bendigo has received funding for centre refurbishment.

Young people needing support can visit the headspace website headspace.org.au for more information about the types of help available.

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