
Goulburn Valley Division of General Practice Ltd.

GP Engagement Project – Drought Final Report

Final report prepared by Debra Cottrell
June 2009

1. Background

In December 2006, the Department of Human Services announced funding to 'drought affected' Primary Care Partnerships through the 'Tackling Mental Health' initiative, to facilitate and support a range of strategies.

The aims of the funding were:

- To strengthen an integrated service response to the mental health impacts of drought, through a partnership approach that builds on existing drought response structures and processes e.g., local government drought planning (particular partners include primary health, mental health, family and early childhood services, general practice and local government)
- To ensure that broader PCP planning and priorities reflect a drought focus
- To support the further development of skills, knowledge and planning skills in health promotion, service coordination, recognition of mental health/stress indicators and improved service access
- To expand PCP capacity for participation/leadership in community needs analysis including recognition of existing social capital, and the identification of practice models that enhance mental health and wellbeing in communities affected by drought.

Additional funding has been granted in 2007/2008 with \$15,000 designated as GP engagement funds, to be targeted through Divisions of General Practice.

2. Activities Undertaken

2.1 GP & Community Information on Referral Pathways

- Print the GP and community information resources regarding the referral pathways (developed by the Drought Service Coordination Project)

During the life of this project, it became evident that any referral pathway that was developed and utilised to its fullest potential would need to transcend the 'drought support services' landscape that currently exists.

Bearing in mind the chronic nature of the ongoing drought, both the federal and state governments are planning alternative funding options.

In 2008 the Federal Government initiated an inquiry into Government Drought Support – *Productivity Commission Draft Inquiry* report which is investigating the Economic, Social and Productivity aspects of the drought. This will influence policy and funding for current services. Of particular relevance to this project is the social impact of drought; however the final report is yet to be published.

New terminology was emerging through the draft version – dryness rather than drought, climate change and climate variability. There appears to be a shift toward mainstreaming drought support services, possibly in an attempt to rationalise funding and services provision. The referral pathway has, therefore, been developed with this in mind.

Please see copy of resource developed at the end of this report. This has been printed and distributed to all general practices (June 2009.)

2.2 Reprint the updated wallet size contacts card

6000 cards were printed in late June 2008, following contact with all organisations listed on the card and updating of details where required. The card was expanded due to increased service provision and also to include Strathbogie Shire, so that the whole of the GVPCP catchment area was included.

This meant that the card was much longer than the original card, however was still able to be folded into a smaller pocket/wallet size card.

On 24 June 2008, the PCP membership were contacted, advised that the cards were available and asked to advise quantity required, which were provided to them as per their request. Cards have continued to be provided as per requests over the past year, and are being utilised by the Community Support Workers in both the More Allied Health Services program and Mental Health Support for Drought Affected Communities Initiative.

2.3 Profession development session/s GPs & Allied Health

On 18 June 2008, the Division held a continuing professional development workshop entitled – Building the Local Mental Health Care Team.

Of the 32 persons in attendance, there were eight GPs, two Social Workers, one Occupational Therapist, four Psychologists, five Navigating Life staff members and several Division representatives.

The night was facilitated by Dr Graeme Jones and Merinda March, Team Leader of Navigating Life. Presentations were also provided by Bill Brown, Area Mental Health Service, Sally Thomas, Primary Mental Health & Early Intervention Team and Clare Payne, Intake Assessment Worker with Goulburn Valley Community Health Service.

GP Kits for referral to Navigating Life were distributed and Goulburn Valley Community Health Service provided hard copy information on their counselling services.

Feedback from the evening was that the participants valued the networking opportunity; felt the case study discussions were valuable and that it was good to hear about other services that were available in the area and local referral pathways.

A second education and networking forum was held on 18 February 2009. This forum was attended by 28 GPs, social workers, psychologists, mental health staff and staff of the Division.

Attendees were updated on the changes to the Division's mental health and generalist counselling through the amalgamated 'Navigating Life' service.

Dr Sophie Reed presented on the Mobiltype project – a pilot project in the Goulburn Valley targeted to youth. This program can include young people who may be suffering the affects of relationship breakdown and hardship due to the affects of the drought on their family.

Attendees were also asked to provide feedback on what works well for them currently when referring persons for support, what they would like to change and any further resources that may be of use to them.

And finally, a Focus group has been held with two GPs, two Division staff and a practice manager to review the Human Services Directory and how it could best be utilised by GPs to support persons affected by drought. It was evident through this focus group that the Division needs to work with the Goulburn Valley Primary Care Partnership to roll out resources to organisations including GPs and private allied health services, to ensure that their details are in the HSD and they are aware of its existence and how to best utilise it.

2.4 Profession development session/s Practice Nurses

- Hold information sessions for practice nurses to advise of service provision and distribute resources

Information on referral services for persons experience drought have been distributed through the Division's Practice Nurse Network forum.

2.5 Profession development session/s Practice Managers

- Hold information sessions for practice managers to advise of service provision and distribute resources

Information on referral services for persons experience drought have been distributed through the Division's Practice Manager Network forum.

2.6 Resource distribution to general practice

- Distribute printed resources to every practice in the Division's catchment

Resource distribution has included:

- Navigating Life GP referral kits (June 2008)
- Development and notification of an electronic Navigating Life referral form for downloading into Medical Director (June 2008)
- Information on referral services available for drought affected persons (June 2009)

3. Project Timelines

The project was planned to commence on 1 July 2008 and be completed by 30 June 2009. Due to the early completion of the wallet sized card and the ability to fit the mental health professional development forum into the Divisions education calendar in June, the project commenced a few weeks early.

The project was has now been finalised.

4. Project Funding

Extract from the original submission in March 2008:

If project proposal approved by the Goulburn Valley Primary Care Partnership Executive, payment of \$10,000 would be provided to the Division on 1 July 2008 (following submission of a Tax Invoice) and \$5000 on acceptance of the final report, due no later than 30 June 2009, but able to be submitted earlier if project is completed before 30 June 2009.

Invoice for \$5000 as per the above has been sent with this report.



**Debra Cottrell,
Chief Executive Officer,
Goulburn Valley Division of General Practice Ltd.**

RURAL SERVICES DIRECTORY & REFERRAL PATHWAY

RURAL SERVICES REFERRAL PATHWAY

Moira Healthcare Alliance
"Care in the Community"

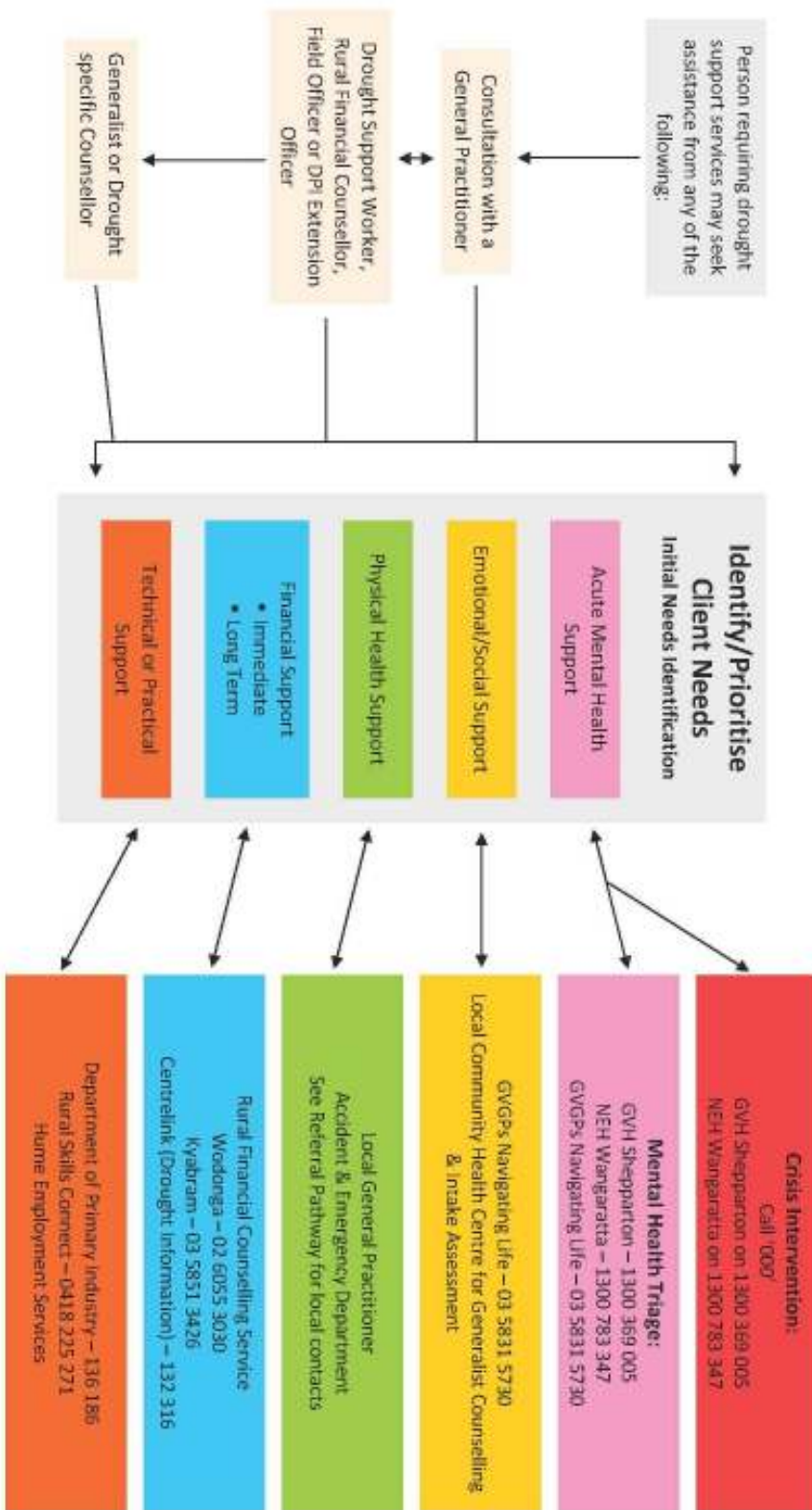


Cobram District Health



Suicide Helpline	1300 651 251
Lifeline	131 114
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800
Crisis Line	136 169
Drought Personal Support Line	1300 655 969
Just Ask - Lifeline (Rural Mental Health Info)	1300 131 114
Goulburn Valley Area Mental Health Service	5823 6000
Domestic Violence	1800 015 811
Mensline Australia	1300 789 978
Men's Referral Service	1800 065 973
Rural Women's Telephone Counselling Service	1800 182 098
Beyond Blue	1300 651 251

Person requiring drought support services or assistance may enter the pathway at various entry points



Organisation	Phone Number
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Acute Mental Health Support

Goulburn Valley Area Mental Health Service	1300 369 005
NEH Wangaratta	1300 783 347
Navigating Life (GVGPs)	03 5831 5730

Emotional/Social Support

Navigating Life (GVGPs)	03 5831 5730
<i>City of Greater Shepparton</i>	
Family Care	03 5823 7000
Goulburn Valley Health	03 5832 2200
Goulburn Valley Community Health Service	03 5823 3200
Relationships Australia	1300 364 277
<i>Moira Shire</i>	
Cobram District Health	03 5871 0900
Nathalia District Hospital	03 5866 9444
Numurkah District Health Service	03 5862 0555
Yarrawonga District Health Service	03 5743 5800
<i>Strathbogie Shire</i>	
Delatite Community Health Service	03 5761 2200
Euroa Hospital	03 5795 0244
Hume Corridor Outreach CHS	03 5736 6399
Nagambie Hospital	03 5794 2604

Financial Support

Rural Financial Counselling	
- Wodonga	02 6055 3030
- Kyabram	03 5851 3426
Centrelink (Drought Information Service)	132 316
Department of Human Service	03 5722 0555
Department of Primary Industry	03 5761 1611

Technical/Practical Support

Department of Primary Industry	136 186
Rural Skills Connect	0418 225 271
Hume Employment Services	03 5480 1182
Moira Food Share	03 5871 1899
St Vincent de Paul	1300 305 330
Moira Shire	03 5871 9222
Strathbogie Shire	03 5795 0000
City of Greater Shepparton	03 5832 9857
Salvation Army – Pathways	03 5833 1099
Seymour Lower Strathbogie	03 5735 4342

Organisation	Phone Number
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Physical Health Support

<i>Cobram</i>	
Cobram Medical Clinic	03 5872 2166
Mivo Park Medical Clinic	03 5871 1433
<i>Elmore</i>	
Elmore Medical Practice	03 5432 6001
<i>Kyabram</i>	
Kyabram Regional Clinic	03 5852 1888
TISDALL, Peter	03 5852 2981
<i>Mooroopna</i>	
Mooroopna Medical Centre	03 5825 2755
Goulburn Medical Centre	03 5825 1000
Rumbalara Health Service	03 5825 2333
<i>Murchison</i>	
Murchison Medical Centre	03 5826 2575
<i>Nagambie</i>	
Nagambie Medical Centre	03 5794 1816
<i>Nathalia</i>	
Nathalia Medical Clinic	03 5866 2201
<i>Numurkah</i>	
Numurkah Medical Centre	03 5862 2111
Quinn Street Clinic	03 5862 2044
<i>Rushworth</i>	
Rushworth House Medical Clinic	03 5856 1329
<i>Shepparton</i>	
Archer Street Clinic	03 5821 7344
Lister House Medical Centre	03 5831 2333
The Old House	03 5831 1366
Princess Park Clinic	03 5821 9655
Wyndham House Clinic	03 5821 5633
Nixon Street Medical Centre	03 5822 1000
Marketplace Medical Centre	03 5822 2677
<i>Tatura</i>	
Tatura Medical Centre	03 5824 1244