



Young People in Regional Areas, GPs and Mental Health

Why GP MHTP are creating barriers to Mental Health Care

Barriers to Mental Health Care Help-Seeking in Regional Areas

- RACGP (2015) stated that GPs leaving regional and rural areas in favour of metro areas was a real issue
- Between 2011-2013 1 in 5 GPs changed their primary place of practice (RACGP)
- Only 21% of GPs could offer a same-day bulk-billed appointment in a regional or rural area for a semi-urgent or non-urgent issue (RACGP)
- Many young people attend their family GP and do not have the health literacy skills to understand confidentiality
- Young people and services in both Armidale and Moree areas have reported having to wait 4-6 weeks for a non-urgent appointment with their GP




What Regional Youth Taskforce Members have said...

"I have had to change doctors several times, as have my friends, as doctors constantly move in and out of the area"

"It's so hard to find a GP that is at a practice for longer than 6 months"

"It's also hard to find doctors who bulk-bill, I have had to pay for almost all of my appointments this year"





Why is this an Issue?

GP MHTP ARE THE ONLY WAY TO ACCESS REBATES UNDER MEDICARE FOR FOCUSED PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGIES

- Many young people in regional and rural areas still do not have access to a headspace centre in their community or nearby
- Young people have reported that they can only access their school counsellor if there is significant risk
- Young people cannot always afford to pay the upfront costs of a GP appointment
- Young people are more likely to seek help if they have an established relationship with their health care provider (Rickwood, Deane and Wilson, 2007)
- Young people have to wait 4-6 weeks for an appointment in which time their condition can worsen

Solutions

Providing scholarships for GPs who study and continue to work in regional and rural areas. Supporting regional and rural GPs in their health and wellbeing and work-life balance

Advocating for Social Workers and Mental Health Nurses in GP practices to complete assessments and coordinate care and take the pressure off GPs.

Ensuring that every young person you work with knows their rights in health





Get in touch

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