

A Plan for People with Eating Disorders



Health

The NSW Government recognises the serious nature of eating disorders, the burden placed on sufferers and their families as a result and the complex mental and physical health components of this disorder. We also understand just how cruel and distressing eating disorders can be and the impact living with an eating disorder can have on a person's life.

To address the needs of people with eating disorders, the NSW Government has developed a Service Plan for People with Eating Disorders, available on the NSW Health website.



What are Eating Disorders?

Eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa, are a group of illnesses that have an adverse impact on physical and mental health and development. Without effective treatment they can cause serious and permanent harm or even death.

Why does NSW need an Eating Disorders Service Plan?

There are recognised gaps in availability, with local differences in access and service options. Since 2000, there has been a fourfold increase in admissions to The Children's Hospital at Westmead and a tenfold increase in outpatient care. For adults, many Local Health Districts (LHDs) lack specialist skills to manage the complexity of treatment for enduring eating disorders with an over-reliance on specialist beds for adults with eating disorders.

The NSW Government is responding to this challenge by delivering on *NSW 2021: A Plan to make NSW number one* goals:

- ▶ Keep people healthy and out of hospital; and
- ▶ Provide world class clinical services with timely access and effective infrastructure.

What have we been doing well?

NSW is leading in developing staff to support people with eating disorders. Family therapy training and an interactive Eating Disorders Online Training Program is a world first that supports skill development in the diagnosis, assessment and management of eating disorders. NSW Adult day programs for people with mild to moderate illness have proven to be effective and acceptable for many young people. We have internationally recognised expertise and highly effective specialised treatment services, with many clinicians working in challenging circumstances across NSW, and particularly in regional areas.



What does the Service Plan say?

Commonwealth and State governments share responsibility for responding to eating disorders through public, private and non-Government Organisation providers. The *NSW Service Plan for People with Eating Disorders* confirms the central role of LHD Mental Health Services in ensuring access to care for people with an eating disorder at a local level, links with GPs, allied health workers and private health providers, are strengthened with relevant public health specialties including medical and allied health support.

What do we need?

- ▶ General Community Based Interventions;
- ▶ Specialist Outpatient Treatment;
- ▶ Hospital Based Interventions;
- ▶ Tertiary Specialist Inpatient Treatment; and
- ▶ Skills development and capacity building.

The Service Plan also describes current treatment, service delivery models and contemporary research. It outlines the strategic directions for expansion of eating disorder services in NSW, highlighting the components, standards and treatment models required to ensure that people suffering with eating disorders have access to appropriate support and treatment, irrespective of their location.

The Service Plan emphasises the responsibility of LHDs to engage with expert clinicians, as part of forming local networks across public and private local providers to maximise local access and service provision. They will connect on a regular basis through the statewide eating disorder network workshops run by the Centre for Eating and Dieting Disorders and through regular conferences to exchange knowledge.

What does the Service Plan focus on?

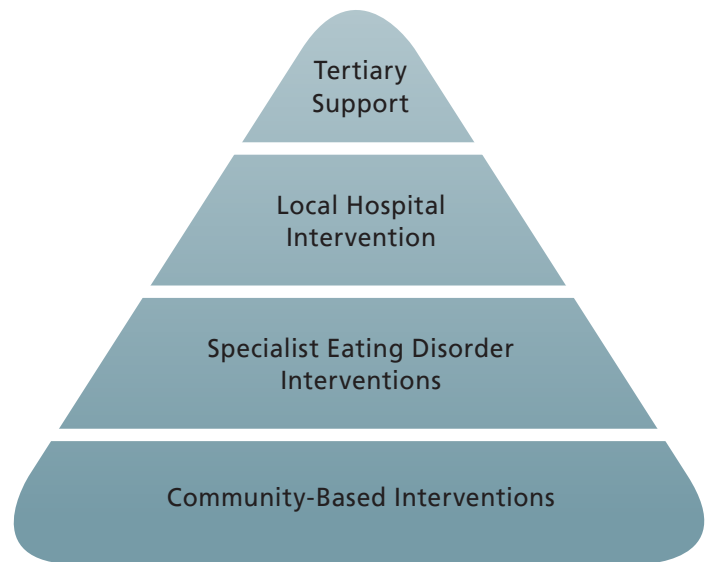
1. **Prevention**, by working with the wider community to promote positive self-image and healthy behaviours;
2. **Early recognition** of risk behaviours and signs of physical and psychological distress related to eating and body image and access to appropriate interventions;
3. Responses to **different levels of need** with evidence-based interventions to promote recovery; and
4. **Early access** to acute intensive and integrated care, to minimise harm including medical, psychological and psychiatric treatments.

What will the NSW Government do?

The NSW Government is supporting implementation by investing in targeted service expansion over the life of the Plan. In 2013/14 a total of \$1.6 million has been allocated.

Specifically, funds will support:

- ▶ A Pilot Child and Adolescent Day program delivered through the Sydney Children's Hospital Network in partnership with The Butterfly Foundation, to be trialled over the life of the Service Plan to test the efficacy and appropriateness for younger people. The new community-based service located at The Butterfly Foundation's facility in Crows Nest will operate for people aged 10-18 and their families. Day Program staff will provide consultation and education across the state through tele-health and abridged residential treatment programs. This program will ensure that people in rural NSW have increased access to services while minimising the time young people and their families need to be away from home.
- ▶ Expansion of Adult Specialist Eating Disorder Services. Through this Service Plan, the NSW Government will expand the number of specialist beds (statewide) for adults with eating disorders from five to nine. This will include a six bed Centre of Excellence at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital's Adult Eating Disorder Unit. Furthermore, the NSW Government will also provide funding to purchase additional access to private beds to allow inpatient care needs.
- ▶ Enhanced capacity of the two existing Adult Eating Disorder Day Programs, one on the Central Coast and the service linked to the eating disorders services provided at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Additional funding will strengthen the provision of care in the community.



- ▶ The establishment of a new Adult Eating Disorder Day Program in regional NSW. Building on local capacity and networks, additional funding will be allocated to establish a new adult day program in the Hunter region that will provide eight specialist clinical places for adults with eating disorders.
- ▶ Statewide Eating Disorders Service Development Coordinators that will work with LHDs to support them in accessing specialist consultation, access to specialist treatment and ongoing training across NSW. Under the Plan, the four existing NSW Eating Disorder Service Coordinators' roles will take on a wider cross-regional focus to further support clinical networks and facilitate access to care, and to increase access to high quality treatment in rural and regional NSW.



How will this plan change things?

In releasing this Service Plan, the NSW Government aims to support timely access to services by:

- ▶ Ensuring every health service can be a point of entry and has the capacity and capability to provide all necessary services for people who have, or are at risk of developing, an eating disorder;
- ▶ Ensuring every health service has the capability to link with and be supported by specialist eating disorders expertise;
- ▶ Ensuring eating disorder outpatient programs are accessible to allow patients to transition between general and intensive outpatient treatment;
- ▶ Increasing access by expanding services for adults and adolescents; and
- ▶ Funding the development and expansion of specialist eating disorder services and support across the system, as well as the dissemination of high-level clinical skills.

More information is available from the Centre for Eating and Dieting Disorders
<http://www.cedd.org.au/>



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www.health.nsw.gov.au

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