NSW GOVERNMENT | **Health** Sydney Local Health District
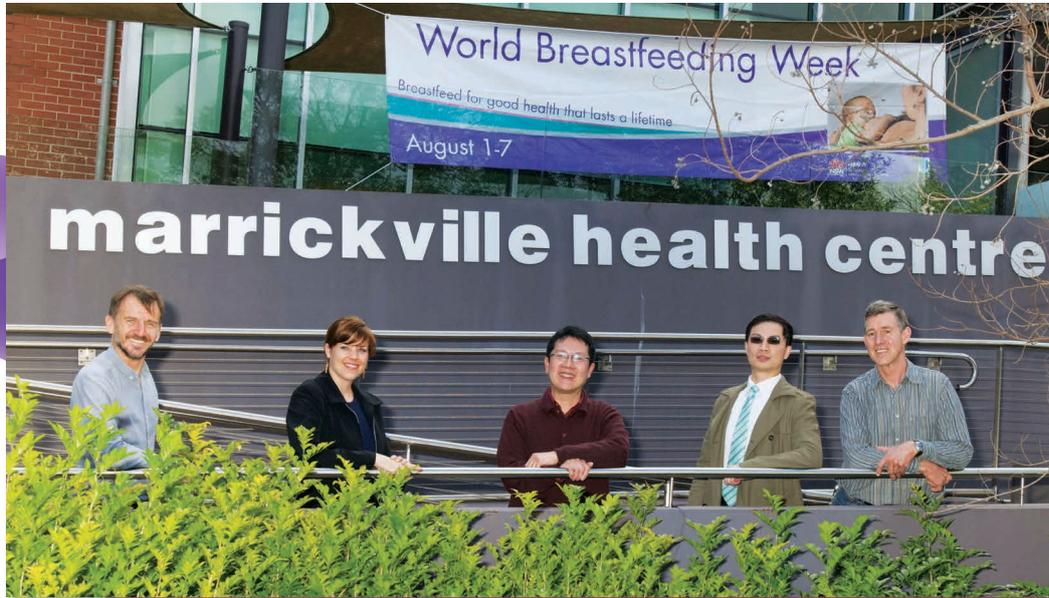
Holistic health **for** mental health clients

Introduction

The GP Clinic, co-located with the Mental Health Community Centre, aims to screen, assess and treat physical health problems of clients who do not otherwise have a GP. The co-located GP clinic has cared for over 100 consumers who had not seen a GP in the last 12 to 18 months.

A partnership with existing mental health services, the co-location model ensures community mental health services work collaboratively with the GP to improve the health status of community mental health clients, providing seamless and continuous care.

This initiative increases community access to GPs, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and other allied mental health professionals for mental health care.

Key activities

The functional, funding, legal and administrative model for this clinic required innovation, given the co-location of a private general practice on the grounds of a state funded health organisation.

Sydney Local Health District (SLHD) provides the infrastructure at no cost, including use of a consultation room, medical equipment, nursing and administrative support. Inner West Sydney Medicare Local provides support for practice management and information systems. The introduction of a GP clinical nurse by SLHD enhances the communication between the GP and mental health clinicians. The improved communication assists with more accurate diagnosis and timely interventions.

Key achievements

This innovative GP clinic delivers holistic care with a focus on consumers at risk of metabolic syndrome, including diabetes.

The close working partnership between the GP and Marrickville Community Mental Health Service resulted in earlier detection and intervention of physical health problems, improved care co-ordination and increased access to a range of health services and preventative health interventions.

The model is considered to be of national significance with the potential to be easily transferred to similar community mental health service settings.

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