

### Lead agent for Emerald headspace centre announced

Australia's peak youth mental health and wellbeing group, headspace, is a step closer to delivering services in the Central Highlands with the appointment of a lead agent for its first stand-alone site in the region.

Funded by Commonwealth primary healthcare agency Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN, Anglicare Central Queensland will head up the new centre in Emerald, providing tailored mental health and wellbeing support to people aged 12 to 25.

PHN CEO Pattie Hudson said AnglicareCQ had a strong history of providing services to young people in the region, and continues to play a key role in the Central Highlands Suicide Prevention Group.

"The PHN's mental health team has collaborated closely with the community of Emerald to secure a full headspace centre and we are absolutely delighted to announce AnglicareCQ as the lead agent," Ms Hudson said.

"AnglicareCQ is already well known in the community and there's been a great deal of support from residents and advocacy groups who have all worked hard over the past few years to have the proposed centre expanded from a satellite to a full-service centre.

"By working together we can build better healthcare services for young people living in Emerald and surrounds."

AnglicareCQ CEO Carol Godwin said the new centre will have a strong focus on addressing youth suicide rates in the area.

"headspace Emerald will be a free, confidential service that will offer early intervention across four key areas – mental health, related physical health, social and vocational support, as well as alcohol and other drug use," Ms Godwin said.

"Given the number of youth suicides in the area, we recognise it's vital to have more early intervention services available locally.

"While AnglicareCQ is the lead agency for this headspace Emerald, we would like to also acknowledge and extend our gratitude to the Central Highlands community and other related services providers for their help in securing the centre.

"Our initial focus will be on creating a youth friendly hub."

The Federal Member for Flynn, Ken O'Dowd, said he is pleased to learn AnglicareCQ has been appointed as the lead agent for headspace Emerald.

"The new Emerald headspace centre, which is now one step closer to opening its doors, will provide tailored and holistic mental health support to 12-25 year old's," Mr O'Dowd said.

"There are more pressures on young people today than ever before and the establishment of this headspace is so important in providing needed services in our region.

"With drought, a global pandemic and other stressful events crippling our rural communities like Emerald, most of us think of this as just adult problems, however, these effect the family unit as whole.'

"I want our young people to know they are not alone on their journey, and that headspace is there to deliver quality frontline support and coordinate the right interventions for people who are at risk.

## MEDIA RELEASE

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“Early intervention is absolutely critical to helping young people with mental health issues.”

Best known for coal mining operations in the surrounding areas, Emerald is a rural town at the heart of the Central Highlands and home to an urban population of more than 14,000 residents.

headspace CEO Jason Trethowan said the appointment of a lead agency for headspace Emerald was an important step in establishing a service locally to ensure young people in the area can access the support they need.

“We know it’s much harder for young people to access mental health services in rural and remote parts of Australia,” Mr Trethowan said.

“headspace services like this one in Emerald will go a long way to ensure young people across the region can get the specific youth friendly-support they need to help them get back on track.”

headspace Emerald is expected to open for services by the end of 2021.

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