

**30 August 2023**

## **Tender Now Open: The Way Back NSW - Suicide Aftercare Service**

Wentworth Healthcare, provider of the Nepean Blue Mountains Primary Health Network (NBMPHN), is seeking submissions from suitable providers to deliver a new suicide aftercare service in the Nepean Blue Mountains region.

The service is co-funded by the Commonwealth and NSW Government under the Bilateral Agreement on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention and is based on The Way Back NSW model of care which offers trauma-informed, non-clinical psychosocial support to people after an attempt to end their life or following suicidal crisis.

The service will initially respond to the needs of the Penrith Local Government Area (LGA) with the view to expand to additional LGAs across the region in the future.

Wentworth Healthcare CEO, Lizz Reay, said the aftercare service provided to people in the weeks and months after an attempt to end their life, or following suicidal crisis, is important in reducing the risk of further suicidal behaviour or crisis.

“Research indicates that the risk of suicide for people who have been hospitalised for a previous attempt is up to 20 to 40 times higher than the general population, and the three months after an attempt is a particularly vulnerable time,” said Ms Reay.

A recent review by the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry found that coordinated proactive aftercare has the potential to decrease suicide attempts by up to 19.8%. The Way Back NSW model of care ensures people have support for up to three months following a hospital admission for suicidal crises or a suicide attempt.

“The Way Back NSW service model provides non-clinical psychosocial support through a proactive outreach approach. In this model, the support coordinator’s lived experience of suicide is recognised and valued. Each coordinator will also have access to clinical advice and supervision and will play a vital role in linking clients to their existing networks, such as carers, family and friends, and to existing clinical and community-based services,” said Ms Reay.

“The model assists people by helping to improve their emotional state, wellbeing, coping skills and resilience, and by enhancing protective factors, such as their social and community connections, and engagement with parallel clinical treatments. This helps to ensure that people remain safe and supported once they leave the hospital, and that they continue to access community-based services that meet their individual needs,” said Ms Reay.

The chosen provider will work closely with the NBMPHN and Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District (NBMLHD) to ensure people who present at emergency departments are referred to the service.



Ms Reay added that as part of the Bilateral Agreement, the organisation has developed, implemented and delivered various mental health support services right across the region.

“We are committed to providing comprehensive, coordinated and community-focused mental health and suicide prevention services in our region. Funding under the Bilateral Agreement is helping to integrate primary, secondary and tertiary mental healthcare and suicide prevention services, helping people access and receive the right care at the right time.”

A variety of organisations are encouraged to apply. **Submissions close 5:00pm Tuesday 10 October.** For more information visit [www.nbmphn.com.au/tenders](http://www.nbmphn.com.au/tenders)

Prospective applicants are invited to attend an **industry information session on 12 September from 12.30pm-1.30pm** that will cover a high-level overview of The Way Back NSW model and the tender, with an opportunity to ask questions. More information, including registration details, is available via [www.nbmphn.com.au/tenders](http://www.nbmphn.com.au/tenders)