

The Listening Tour

12 MONTH REVIEW

NOVEMBER 2022

headspace Canberra



THE TOUR IN REVIEW

From April to October 2021 headspace Canberra met with over 40 community stakeholders to build relationships, get feedback and improve collaboration. 12 months on, we are pleased to submit this review. It is a reflection on what has changed and where we still have work to do.

AT A GLANCE

Here is a snapshot of some of the Listening Tour's outcomes:

- A formal report used for ongoing quality improvement.
- A concerted effort to address wait list times by growing our team from 7 to 15 and increasing student placements.
- Wellbeing initiatives instigated in our workplace to help staff retention.
- An additional First Nations community consultation regarding our service.
- Roll out of an innovative First Nations support stream.
- A trial art therapy stream and peer work stream for non-clinical support.
- New Brief Intervention stream for quicker access to our service.
- GP hired for wrap around support.
- Multiple whole of staff diversity and specialist trainings.
- A new transgender and gender diverse peer drop-in service on site.
- A pending LGBTQIA specialist therapist on site provided by community partner.
- A pending offer by a community partner to fund a mental health role.
- 5 jointly run youth events including collaborations with WWDAct and CRCS.
- Outreach to events, festivals or programs with MYS, MARSS, The Junction, AGA, ANU, Gugan Gulwan, Winnunga Nimmityjah, Project Beats and more, resulting in engagement with over 850+ young people and their families.
- Workshops run at Amaroo High, Good Shepard Primary, Campbell Primary, YWCA, Ted Noffs, CYRS, the AIS and MARSS (upcoming) for over 750+ young people.
- Creation of a monthly newsletter.
- 5 jointly created mental health resources.
- Redevelopment of all intake forms, resources and social media for accessibility.
- headspace Canberra funding put towards Afghani women's Eid event and committed towards the First Hike project for young refugees.

The following review addresses the specific feedback you gave us. We'd love to hear from you if you have any questions!



Jen Ramirez
headspace Canberra
Site Manager



Franke Taylor
headspace Canberra
Community Engagement Officer

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a black long-sleeved top and black trousers, stands with her back to the camera, writing on a whiteboard. She is holding a blue marker. In the foreground, two people are sitting on the floor, facing her. The person on the left is wearing a striped shirt and brown pants, sitting on a red beanbag chair. The person on the right is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and brown pants, sitting on a blue beanbag chair and holding a document. The room has a grey carpet, a white wall, and a window on the left showing trees. A large green abstract shape is in the top right corner.

What do organisations need?



Referrals and intake

WAIT TIMES

Long wait times is a known issue across the mental health sector. In the public sector wait times generally sit between 3-12 months. The private sector looks similar, although many practitioners have simply closed their books due to demand.

However, we are pleased to say we have made some headway in this area. The tables in Figure 1 and Figure 2 compare general wait times in 2019, compared to recent estimates.

CHALLENGES

Often times, wait times reflect broad trends that are out of our control. Since starting as lead agency the following challenges have arisen:

Increase demand due to Covid-19

Recent headspace National research showed that 74% of young people reported a worsening of mental health since the pandemic started¹. This has been reflected in service demand. We receive as many as 90 referrals per week, making us the busiest headspace in our region (9 centres).

Staffing shortages

Like everywhere, our workforce has been hit by the pandemic and flu season. This has resulted in both short term absences and more broadly, increased burnout. There is also a national mental health practitioner shortage², which is compounded by the fact that many workers opt to work privately.

Funding limitations

headspace Canberra is reliant on state and federal funding. Young people having access to our service in a timely fashion is crucial. We are always trying to find innovative ways to manage demand within our funding allocation.

¹ headspace National (2022) <https://headspace.org.au/assets/Uploads/COVID-Client-Impact-Report-FINAL-11-8-20.pdf>

² Institute for Social Science Research (2020) https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021/08/national-mental-health-workforce-strategy-a-literature-review_0.docx

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INNOVATION

Here is what we did between 2021-2022 to work on our wait times.

Workforce expansion

Despite sector wide staff shortages, we managed to grow our workforce from 7 to 15.

Staff retention

hsC has created multiple wellbeing initiatives to support staff retention. These include staff bonding and wellbeing days, staff feedback sessions, improved professional development opportunities and flexible work conditions.

Student placements

We have developed relationships with TAFEs and Universities to offer psychology, counselling, art therapy, peer work, social work and community engagement student placements.

New support streams

We have created new First Nations, Brief Intervention and Art Therapy support streams. We have also supported our Peer Worker to start offering groups and initiated a Tuning into Teens program for families and supports.

Check in option

For young people on longer wait lists who seem likely to disengage, staff can now offer phone check ins whilst they wait for support.

Community education

headspace Canberra is regularly attends organisations and community groups to help educate around appropriate referrals.

Updated website

We are now keeping up to date estimates of our wait times on our website (Figure 4) to help manage expectation and mitigate referrer/young person stress.

More mental health resources

We have redeveloped our resources to be more youth appropriate and accessible (Figure 3). Currently, we have distributed over 1000 mental health workbooks. We hope this will help to improve mental health literacy/assets in community and therefore lower demand on our service.

More outreach

headspace Canberra has provided workshops, events and outreach for over 1200 young people, again to improve mental health literacy/assets and lower service demand.

Figure 1

January 2019	
Intake/YCC	6-8 weeks
Mental Health Clinician	8 months
Onespace	4 weeks
Family clinician	Not active
Peer worker	Not active
First Nations Youth Care Co-ordinator	Not applicable
Art Therapist	Not applicable

Figure 2

September 2022	
Intake	1-3 weeks
Youth Care Co-ordinator	1 month
Mental Health Clinician	3 months
Breif Intervention Stream	4 weeks
Family clinician	1 week
Peer worker	No waitlist
First Nations Youth Care Co-ordinator	No waitlist
Art Therapist	No waitlist

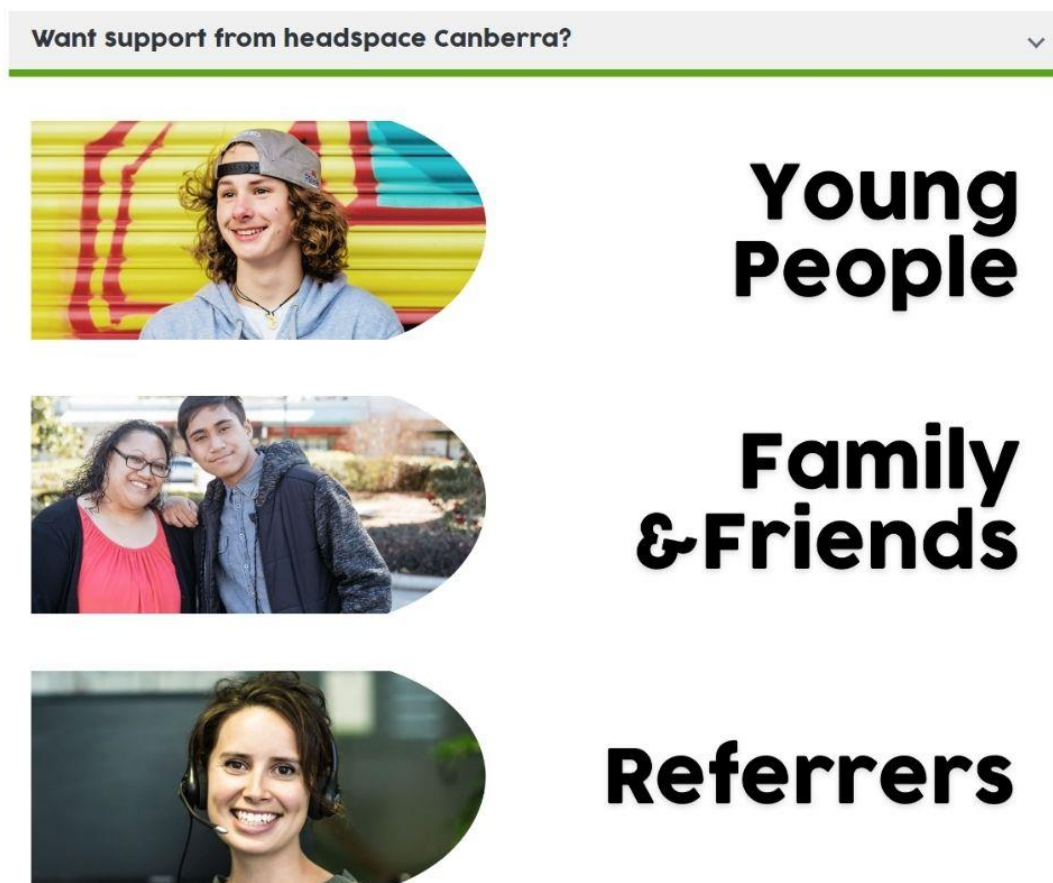
Figure 3

NEW RESOURCES



Figure 4

NEW WEBSITE





Referrals and intake cont.

EMAIL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We advise that referrers call us or drop in with the young person present. However, if workers preference emailing in a written referral, admin now make sure to respond.

GPs can also fax us; with the exception of when our fax was down early 2022, we always send an acknowledgement.

EASY UPDATES ON REFERRALS

Referrers can get updates by calling reception. Our preference is that this be done with the young person present to streamline consent. It should be noted that wait times do vary and reception can often only give an estimate. This information has been added to the new 'referrers' section on our website.

MHTP

Currently, only 1 of our 5 streams (Mental Health Counselling) requires a Mental Health Treatment Plan (MHTP). While we do not always bill to them, it is a headspace National requirement that a GP is involved in a young person's care whilst engaged with this stream. Mental Health Counselling stream accepts Nurse Practitioner MHTP.

Other circumstances that may require a MHTP are:

- When we hire private practitioners on contract who bill against a MHTP.
- If a young person is referred on to Next Steps High, our in kind provider offering extended support for higher complexity presentations.

INTERNAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG REFERRALS

We are pleased to say our in kind alcohol and other drug provider reports an increase in referrals and communication.



Communication and presence

FIRST NATIONS RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

First Nations organisations communicated the importance of relationship building. To assist with this headspace Canberra did several things:

- Organised a further consultation with Aboriginal lead community organisations.
- Gained funding for an identified First Nations support stream which has outreach capacity.
- Undertook outreach and relationship building with Winnunga Nimmityjah, Gugan Gulwan, Burbirra, Gurlanga and Waruga Yardhura.
- Increased whole of staff presence at significant events such as NAIDOC week.
- Engaged with local Ngunnawal artists to create 3 beautiful murals on site.
- Engaged First Nations led organisations for staff and volunteer training.

In development:

- Funding of First Nations led community projects.
- Elder in Residence program.
- Drop in day for First Nations young people and their families.
- First Nations dedicated groups.
- Relationship building with First Nations wellbeing officers at schools.

SERVICE UPDATES

We have developed a monthly newsletter (Figure 5) to keep the sector and community up to date with our work. By regularly checking in we hope to improve inter-service communication and collaboration.

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Figure 5

NEWSLETTER



October newsletter

**referral refresher,
YRG applications
closing and
camp!**



Referrals



Just a reminder, you don't need to do a formal referral.

The best way to get a young person linked with us is to:

- Give us a call when you're with the young person, or;
- Drop in to our Braddon site together.

Pro tip - Only 1 of our 5 support streams needs a Mental Health Treatment Plan. We'll let the young person know after intake if they are assigned to this stream. You don't need to make sure they have one before linking them with us.

Check out the Referrers section on our website for more info

Communication and presence cont.

PRESENCE AT GROUPS, EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

We are pleased to report that we have significantly expanded our outreach since the Listening Tour (Figure 6) . Over the last 12 months we have taken part in events, programs, network meetings and service visits with the following organisations and groups:

- Ted Noffs
- CYRS
- AGA
- The Junction
- Winnunga
- Gugan gulwan
- YWCA
- Northside Community Service
- Northern schools network
- Standby
- Head2Health
- Directions
- MARSS
- Mhub
- WCS
- Amaroo High
- Campbell Primary
- Canberra High school
- CatholicCare
- Good Sheppard Primary
- AIS
- Canberra Health Service
- Safe Haven
- ANU
- CIT

IMPROVED POINTS OF CONTACT

Our community engagement officer has worked hard to increase our service presence. We now have direct contact with over 100 Canberra based organisations and community stakeholders. Reception is also always happy to pass you on to the right place, for example:

Site Manager - Jen Ramirez

Clinical lead - Jason Mortimer

Senior clinician - Kat Sharp

Community Engagement - Frankie Taylor

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Figure 6

OUTREACH!



Amaroo High workshop



Mhub kooky olympics



YRG on outreach



The Junction TDOV event



What do young people need?



Communication

CLEAR INFORMATION WHEN REFERRED

Once referred, all young people are individually contacted via phone to check in and answer any questions.

With the support of our Youth Reference Group we have also created an accessible, youth appropriate video resource explaining what we offer as a service. You can find it on our website and social media.

CONTACT DURING WAIT PERIOD

See wait times discussion in previous section.



Timely support

EARLIER SUPPORT

See wait times discussion in previous section.

TRIAGING FOR PRIORITY GROUPS

In keeping with headspace National's 'no wrong door' model of care we are unable to triage. However, as a work around, First Nations young people now have minimal wait times via our new First Nations Youth Care Coordinator support stream. We have also partnered with AGA to provide a fortnightly drop-in peer service for Trans and Gender Diverse young people.

EARLIER INTAKE

We have made excellent progress in this area. On average, intake sits at 2 weeks wait if a young person is willing to do it over the phone (Figure 2).



Intersectionality

DIVERSE WORKFORCE

headspace Canberra now has BIPoC representation across the following streams: Admin, Youth Care Coordination, Brief Intervention, Mental Health Clinician and First Nations Youth Care Co-ordination.

We are proud to say we are also a disproportionately Queer and gender diverse workforce, and have a strong representation of staff with lived experience of mental illness and disability.

However, we are aware that an organisation requires diversity at all levels in order to be genuinely responsive to community. headspace Canberra has requested the development of a formal affirmative action plan for our service via our parent organisation, Grand Pacific Health. We have also created a Cultural Safety and Practice Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander best practice.

DIVERSE REPRESENTATION IN PERSON AND ONLINE

We have made a commitment to ensure that our physical site and all resources, social media and website content reflect the diversity in our community.

In person

We have invested significant funding towards engaging Ngunnawal artists to create 3 beautiful murals. We are also incorporating international flags and greeting messages in a range of languages at reception.

Online

All social media and website content now prioritises diversity. For example, our recent video series Mental Health Skills was developed by and featured BIPoC young people. We also highlight significant events such as NAIDOC week, Eid, Nowruz, Holi, TDOV, TDOR, Bi Visibility Day and Wear it Purple Day.

Intersectionality cont.

WELL TRAINED WORKFORCE

Since the Listening Tour, headspace Canberra has taken part in the following trainings:

- Trans, Gender Diverse and Intersex training with AGA.
- Suicide response training with Standby.
- Eating Disorder training through Head2Health.
- Child Protection response.

In 2023 we will undertake staff wide anti-racism training through Colour the Conversation and First Nations training.

FUNDING FOR OTHER GROUPS AND PROJECTS

We have redirected our donations to specialist community groups and services. We provided funding for Afghani Women's groups and the First Hike Project for young refugees. We are in discussions around funding a Young First Nation Women's Leadership program. We are always happy to support innovative projects and encourage projects to get in touch!





Continuity

LEAD AGENCY DISRUPTION

Fortunately, disruption to support during the lead agency change over is no longer an issue. We are working hard to make sure Grand Pacific Health will maintain it's tender well into the future by ensuring excellent data collection and reporting.

CHANGABLE WORKFORCE

Workforce movement has increased across our sector, particularly since Covid. See staff retention point under wait times section for more information on our approach.



Earlier support

SUPPORT FOR AGES 8-11

This is a discussion currently happening at the headspace National level. headspace Canberra has added it's support to this idea, as the evidence suggest this age group would benefit greatly from early intervention.



Accessibility

ACCESSIBLE OUTWARD FACING CONTENT

This has been a major project of ours. headspace Canberra sought funding from Capital Health Network PHN for a project officer to redevelop all our resources. We are pleased to say we now have a suite of accessible, easy read resources. Internal forms such as 'rights and responsibilities' are also being redone at a Grand Pacific Health level to meet WCAG uidelines.

Affordability

NO COST SERVICE OPTIONS

We continue to have a no cost service options.

Experienced staff

ACCEPT PACFA AND ACA QUALIFICATIONS

headspace Canberra is able to hire counsellors for several of our streams, however Mental Health Counselling remains a psychologist specific space. This is a discussion currently happening at the headspace National level. headspace Canberra has added it's support to this idea as it would mean being able to hire experienced counsellors at a competitive wage.

Flexibility

ACCEPT TEXTS

We are now set up to text with young people using SMSGlobal.

EASY REENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Young people are able to reengage with us without redoing intake as long as it has been under 3 months and there have been no dramatic changes to their mental health presentation (eg. from mild to severe).

ABLE TO CHANGE PRACTITIONERS IF NEEDED

Young people are able to change clinicians or support streams on request. We just advise young people that wait times can apply.



Flexibility cont.

CLINICIANS WITH A RANGE OF GENDERS

Our workforce represents a range of genders/agenders. We are currently advocating for funding for a female role within First Nations Youth Care Co-ordination to offer young people more choice.

OUTREACH OPTIONS

We have been highly successful in increasing outreach. We have written outreach into the contracts for all workers and are discussing how to balance clinician availability with outreach. First Nations Youth Care Co-ordination and Community Engagement have a strong outreach focus in their roles.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

We feel we have done well in this area. Some examples of our innovative options are:

- An art therapy stream.
- First Nations dedicated support.
- Non-clinical engagement including in session ping pong/creative play.
- Drop in options for trans and gender diverse young people.
- A GP who does not require a Medicare card.
- Non-clinical Peer Worker run group sessions.
- Community engagement outreach for young people using alcohol and drugs and young people experiencing homelessness.
- Queer and Disability oriented events including Auslan 101 and Drag makeup classes.
- Regular wellbeing events for staff.



Self determination

YOUNG PEOPLE MAKING THEIR OWN CHOICES

This is a priority for our service. We are heavily youth led in session and consult with the Youth Reference Group frequently.

outreach quotes!

"It let us expose our worries and feelings. It's good to know there is a space place to go when I'm sad"

-Year 6 after outreach workshop

"headspace made me feel welcome. Best day ever"

- Youth attendee at TDOV (The Junction)

A young man with dark hair, wearing a colorful, abstract t-shirt, is looking at a potted plant. He is standing in a room with many other plants. A green circular icon with a thumbs-up symbol is overlaid on the image.

"Young people really enjoyed themselves! I wanted to thank you for the work you did with the attendees who needed extra support. We hope to have you at AGA again!"

- AGA staff member after outreach



Confidentiality and privacy

PRIVATE CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT

headspace Canberra operates within the legal and ethical boundaries of confidentiality and privacy law. All staff undertake training in this as part of orientation. All staff are also trained in the use of our data/confidentiality breach reporting system monitored by Grand Pacific Health.



Warmth

A WELCOMING PHYSICAL SPACE

The Youth Reference Group have recently conducted a full review of our physical space, assessing it for accessibility, warmth and youth appropriateness. They have been allocated a budget to redesign the space.

A FOCUS OF RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Our clinicians focus significant energy towards relationship building in the following ways:

- Taking it slow; they do not rush into goal setting or psycho-social education. They are led by the young person.
- Using soft skills such as humour, warmth and relatability.
- Incorporating non-clinical methods such as art therapy, physical activity and games.
- Using youth mental health recovery frameworks to avoid stigmatising young people.
- Using youth affirming language and explaining things as 'humanly' as possibly.

NON-CLINICAL OPTIONS

See innovative approaches section.



what next?

WAIT TIMES

We will continue to workshop wait time management and balance service demand with available resources and staffing.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

We hope to create a Family and Friend's reference group and more support options for the people surrounding young people.

BIPOC ENGAGEMENT

Dedicating time and energy towards engaging Black, Indigenous and other People of Colour at all levels of our organisation, including dedicated programs and resources.

PEER WORK

We would love to invest in more peer work support and will pursue funding where and when available.

YOUNG MEN ENGAGEMENT

We will work to make sure our outreach, resources and service is relevant and affirming for young men as this demographic is currently underrepresented in our service.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with any feedback or questions about this report or our service more broadly!

Contact our Community Engagement officer at ftaylor@gph.org.au



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headspace Canberra
Site Manager



Franke Taylor
headspace Canberra
Community Engagement Officer



