



YOUTH ENHANCED SERVICE CASE STUDY

AMBER YOUTH WELLNESS

North Metropolitan Perth

INTRODUCTION

Amber Youth Wellness is a free youth mental health outreach service located in Perth's North. Amber Youth Wellness supports young people aged 12 to 25 years with complex mental health needs that are having a significant impact on their everyday functioning, and who are experiencing significant barriers to accessing supports. The service acknowledges that accessing support can be difficult for some young people so aims to make the process friendly and easy for them.

Amber Youth Wellness consists of a multidisciplinary team, including a medical consultant, an Aboriginal practice worker, trauma-informed therapist, senior case workers, youth workers and peer workers. The service offers assessment, counselling, medical consultation, case management and a range of one on one and group interventions, and activities to support young people to reach their goals and improve their mental wellness, relationships and overall functioning.

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ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- 12 to 25 years
- Residing in North Metropolitan Perth
- Experiencing mental health difficulties complicated by:
 - social and/or personal stressors
 - significant barriers to accessing support
- Experiencing a significant impact on their everyday functioning

KEY PRESENTING ISSUES

- Often no formal diagnosis
- Seeking psychosocial support
- At risk of suicide



- NGOS
- OUTREACH SERVICE PARTNERS
- GPs
- TERTIARY SERVICES
- SELF-REFERRAL

INTEGRATED TRIAGE ACROSS MERCYCARE YOUTH SERVICES

AMBER YOUTH WELLNESS
 Mercy Community Services Ltd
 North Metropolitan Perth

STAFFING PROFILE:

- 0.4 FTE manager
- 1.0 FTE clinical lead
- 0.4 FTE medical consultant
- 3.3 FTE senior case workers
- 0.9 FTE trauma-informed counsellor
- 1.0 FTE Aboriginal practice worker
- 2.2 FTE youth workers
- 0.8 FTE peer workers
- 0.6 FTE senior administration officer

ALL TEAM MEMBERS RECEIVE INDIVIDUAL LINE MANAGEMENT AND CLINICAL SUPERVISION, AND GROUP REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS

- CBT, DBT, ACT, MI
- Trauma-informed counselling
- Narrative therapy
- Family work



CASELOADS

- 12 clients per FTE

CASE MANAGEMENT

- Senior case managers and youth/peer workers
- Each young person's needs and preferences determine who comprises their care team

COLLABORATIVE CARE PLANNING

- Person-centred, strengths based, recovery focused and trauma informed
- Clinical staging model assists staff from intake through to discharge

ENHANCED ACCESS

- Outreach to home and community locations
- Telehealth
- Some flexibility in operating hours



ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE

- Access to youth-friendly local GPs
- Contracted adolescent physician
- Telepsychiatry secondary consults with Orygen
- Exploring psychiatry partnership options

STRONG TRAUMA FOCUS

12+ MONTHS DURATION OF CARE, AS NEEDED; USUALLY WEEKLY TO FORTNIGHTLY SESSIONS

PARTNERSHIPS AND INTEGRATION

- Advisory group with local NGOs, Tertiary services, Youth representatives and Orygen
- Co-location partnerships with local psychosocial services
- Community engagement plan for strategic integration

REGULAR PROGRESS MONITORING

- K10 / K5
- SOFAS
- Recovery Star
- Young people engaged in care-planning



STEPPING BACK PROCESS

- Three top-up sessions with previous worker; or
- Support to navigate other services; or
- Full return to Amber Youth Wellness

EXIT

- GP
- CAMHS/CMHT/SPECIALIST SERVICE IF REQUIRED



GOALS

Young people are actively engaged in care planning. They are supported to set recovery focused SMART goals, using the Recovery Star and to celebrate successes along the way

CHALLENGES

Change fatigue

The current phase of co-design is to reflect on the original aim, and what is now working or not working in the program. Managing change fatigue in staff during this time has been a challenge.

Demand management

Like many services, referrals are currently exceeding the capacity of the service. Managing this demand through strategies such as effective partnerships with community-based organisations is an ongoing priority, to allow high-quality care to be provided to as many young people as possible.

Meeting community expectations

In the early stages of the co-design process, the service received a lot of positive attention regarding plans to address a gap in existing services. Stakeholders were excited to see the launch of a program that they co-designed and was so greatly needed in the community. However, the gap in existing services has widened, and this combined with the initial positive attention, has created expectations which have been challenging for the program to meet.

SUCCESSSES

Co-design and the Fidelity Tool

Following six months of co-design with community members and young people, Amber Youth Wellness developed a strong sense of what colleagues and consumers wanted from a Youth Enhanced Service. In order to preserve this information, a Fidelity Tool is currently being developed. This tool will prompt discussion about the service model, so staff can reflect on where the service is at and where they want it to be.

Cultural strength and safety

Ensuring the service is both culturally safe and strong has been a priority for the team. The Aboriginal practice worker is a strong voice for both existing clients and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people across the community. To ensure this is supported, many of the team have attended cultural training as they continue to work toward a culturally strong service for young people.

Peer worker component

The need for peer workers in this service was clearly identified by both young people and service providers in the codesign process. MercyCare has consulted with other Youth Enhanced Services and local peer support workers who have long established experience in this area and has prioritised supporting peer workers to ensure they have regular external, program development, and line management supervision.

HELLO!

I met my main social worker, we shall call them P, through headspace back in 2019 before transferring over to Amber Youth Wellness 2020 with her. I found them extremely supportive with a real passion to understand my troubles whatever they may be. It was only a few sessions before I had gotten the advice and tools to properly address certain issues in my life.

I originally thought my issues were quite minuscule in the grand scheme of things, and I think a lot of other young people also think that about themselves too. But before I knew it, my job loss and the new COVID environment had landed me in another hospitalisation. I had no idea how I had got there, for I was just a little bit anxious, a little bit depressed, right?

I was used to feeling alone in my hospital visits, people would message me, sure, but it was rare there was a familiar face about. Family stopping by was even rarer. I guess I'm quite a different person in there than I am when I see my friends on my good days, and it can be too much for some. But my social worker was dedicated to visiting me, and they treated me with the same compassion and care as they did before my hospitalisation. There was no stigma, no pity, but only a passion to be the absolute best person that I needed, not only in this time but at any time.

And this level of care and love only continued through to now, as I am now moving forward into programs that practice mindfulness and community companionship. I hope to continue into social work, to bring other young people that same joy I felt when there was someone who built that connection for me and kept the flame within lit.

GET IN TOUCH

IF YOU'D LIKE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ORYGEN, PLEASE CALL +61 3 9966 9100 OR SEND AN EMAIL TO INFO@ORYGEN.ORG.AU

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Orygen acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands we are on and pays respect to their Elders past and present. Orygen recognises and respects their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationships to Country, which continue to be important to the First Nations people living today.

**REVOLUTION
IN MIND** *ory
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