

access to allied psychological services (ATAPS)...

WentWest, Western Sydney's Medicare Local has been delivering and managing The Access to Allied Psychological Services program (more commonly referred to as ATAPS) throughout the western Sydney LHD (Auburn, Parramatta, Holroyd, Blacktown and Hills LGA) since 2006.

ATAPS is a Commonwealth funded program designed to assist and support GP's and Primary health care services to engage patients with local and professional mental health clinicians. The ATAPS program provides short term intervention along with focussed psychological services to financially disadvantaged people in our communities who may not otherwise be able to access mental health services. WentWest delivers the ATAPS services at no cost to patients, where they would not otherwise be able to afford the fee charged by the Mental Health Professional or a gap payment. ATAPS removes any financial barriers to accessing mental health services that may have been preventing the patient accessing services.

The Western Sydney Medicare Local has expanded the ATAPS program to include assisting Children aged between 0 and 12 years of age, to receive support from a trained child mental health clinician (ATAPS Provider). In 2013 Children's Mental Health has been the major focus. Projections indicate that every dollar spent on effective early intervention, seven dollars is saved in future public service for children that go untreated, therefore highlighting the significance of identifying and treating emotional and behavioural difficulties in children as early as possible.

ATAPS is focused on continuing to expand the referral pathways to psychological intervention through ATAPS by providing school counsellors, directors of childcare services, social workers, Paediatricians and Psychiatrists the ability to refer children into ATAPS. WentWest are pleased to now include "Secondary Referral Agents" to create an integrated health system and greater ability of access points for individuals experiencing mild to moderate mental health concerns.

Secondary referrals are a great way to engage patients who are already engaged with a professional service and might be apprehensive about going to a GP allowing the patient to engage in 3 sessions as an entry point into accessing mental health services. After the 3 sessions the patient will need to engage with their GP to contin-

ue the treatment and obtain a mental health treatment plan.

Secondary Referral Agents include;

- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI) – Aboriginal Medical Services, ATSI mental health services
- At Risk Suicide – Acute Mental Health Team,
- Children - School Counsellors/ Principals, Child Care Directors, Paediatricians, Psychiatrists, social workers
- Perinatal – Obstetricians, Maternal and Child Health Nurses

How to refer – For Secondary Referral Agents (SRA):

- Patient (or parent/guardian) will need to provide consent and sign the referral form.
- Select a Mental Health Clinician who is an authorised ATAPS provider –
- For assistance please call the ATAPS team at WentWest on 02 8811 7100 or refer to www.wentwest.com.au/mentalhealth
- Send the completed Provisional referral form to WentWest via fax 02 8208 9941
- The SRA will receive a letter from WentWest to confirm the patient has been accepted into the program.

Treatment;

- After 3 provisional sessions the ATAPS Mental Health Clinician provides the patient's GP with a letter outlining the concerns and requests an ATAPS referral from the GP for further sessions.

How to refer – General Practitioners:

- Completes a Mental Health Treatment Plan (MHTP) and ATAPS Referral Form with the patient's (Parent/ guardian's) signed consent.
- GP approves or selects a Mental Health Clinician who is an authorised ATAPS provider –
- For assistance please call the ATAPS team at WentWest on 02 8811 7100 or refer to www.wentwest.com.au/mentalhealth
- Fax the ATAPS Referral Form and Mental Health Treatment Plan (MHTP) to the WentWest secure fax no. 02 8208 9941.
- The GP will receive a letter from WentWest to confirm the patient has been accepted into the program.

Treatment;

- After 6 or 9 sessions the GP receives a Progress Report from the ATAPS Provider.
- GP arranges an appointment with the patient and conducts a mental health review.
- GP determines if the patient could benefit from additional sessions and completes the
- 'GP use only' section of the Progress Report.
- GP faxes the Progress Report to the WentWest secure fax no. 02 8208 9941.
- WentWest receives the Progress Report and contacts the nominated ATAPS provider to make arrangements for patient to continue treatment.

“The ATAPS program requires identifying patients who are most vulnerable and prioritise services to the most appropriate patients...”

Treatment under ATAPS is for 12 sessions over a 12 month period. Under exceptional circumstances, an additional 6 sessions (18 Sessions in total) can be provided to a patient.

WentWest has engaged with over 90 mental health clinicians throughout the western Sydney LHD who are contracted to deliver ATAPS services. WentWest reviews and selects clinicians based on qualifications, experience, community needs as well as geographical location to assist the primary health sector and local referring agents. You can search for ATAPS Providers by going to the website www.wentwest.com.au/mentalhealth. Additionally WentWest employs 4 clinicians who are co-located within Local Health District sites to assist in service gaps and compliment the ATAPS services to existing community mental health services.

The ATAPS program requires identifying patients who are most vulnerable and prioritise services to the most appropriate patients. This is prioritised based on referral information, including Mental Health Treatment plan and Patient's Health Care Card. Referrals that are not appropriate for ATAPS are passed on to the selected ATAPS providers, however the patient is seen under Better Access – Medicare pro-

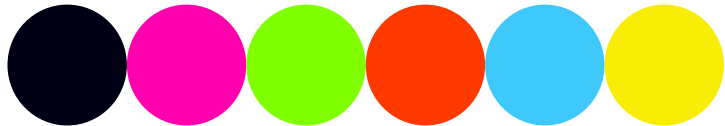
gram, which may result in the patient having to pay a gap fee for services.

Additionally patients who require intensive and urgent treatment can be referred via the ATAPS priority referral services, WentWest is able to respond to referrals for people at risk of suicide by having such referrals assigned to our employed clinicians, who are able to respond within 24 hours and provide an appointment within 72 hours.

Patients under the ATAPS Priority Referral services are eligible to receive up to 12 sessions in a 2 month period.

For more information please contact the Mental Health team at WentWest ataps@wentwest.com.au or 8811 7100.

Visit our website www.wentwest.com.au/mentalhealth



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AUSTRALIA'S FIRST EVER AUTISM FRIENDLY PERFORMANCE OF THE LION KING Saturday 14 June 2014, Capitol Theatre Sydney

Autism Awareness Australia is thrilled to be partnering with Disney to bring you Australia's first ever autism friendly performance of THE LION KING!

This specially adapted performance will be suitable for individuals on the autism spectrum and their families, to enjoy the award-winning production in a friendly and supportive environment.

Slight adjustments to the production include removal of strobe lighting, reduction of any jarring sounds and lights focused into the audience, house lights being dimmed and flexibility to bring your own snacks.

Trained staff will be on hand, and dedicated quiet and activity areas set up, should anyone need to leave their seats.

Commenting on this special event, Autism Awareness Australia CEO, Nicole Rogerson, said, "We are delighted to be working with Disney to bring you this very special performance. It's encouraging to see iconic organisations be so open and welcoming to the autism community. We know parents will love the opportunity to have a fun day out with the whole family!"

The Lion King is the first major musical to hold an autism friendly performance in Australia, having already held successful performances in New York, London, Houston & Pittsburgh.

Tickets go on sale 9am Thursday, 24 October 2013 via a dedicated event website www.lionkingautismfriendly.com.au. Seats are limited and we urge everyone to be quick to avoid disappointment. For more information, please contact Elizabeth Sarian Elizabeth@autismawareness.com.au 0402 461 555

For more information about Autism Awareness Australia visit www.autismawareness.com.au