

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### WAAMH's IPS WORKS selected to support headspace get youth into work

THE Western Australian Association for Mental Health's (WAAMH) service IPS WORKS has been contracted by the Department of Social Services to provide Individual Placement and Support (IPS) support to 14 new headspace sites participating in the national IPS youth trial.

With 75% of mental ill-health occurring before the age of 25, opportunities for young people, presenting with mental health needs, to access employment is invaluable in increasing economic participation and reducing the risk of disengagement and developing vocational dependency.

With headspaces' mental health support and services primarily targeted nationally at young people, IPS WORKS support will help make a huge difference to helping its clients achieve their employment goals.

The IPS employment model, will be adopted by headspace, with the support of IPS WORKS to link youth experiencing mental health issues with employers, educational opportunities, and the workforce.

WAAMH chief executive Rod Astbury said mental health issues could be a real barrier to gaining and keeping employment.

"International research has consistently shown the IPS evidence-based model of supported employment to be the most effective employment program model for people with severe and enduring mental ill-health," Mr Astbury said.

IPS is an evidence-based model of supported employment meeting the needs of people impacted by mental ill-health. IPS WORKS specialises in supporting community organisations and services in implementing the IPS model, ensuring fidelity to the principles, and contributing to the evidence-base.

"Evidence shows that meaningful employment provides us with sense of purpose, social inclusion, and financial independence," Mr Astbury said. "These can be vital factors for maintaining good mental health for people, especially young people."

IPS WORKS - which has been supporting mental health services and disability employment services to implement IPS in WA for more than three years thanks to support from the Mental Health Commission - will implement and provide IPS services, training, tools and templates, fidelity reviews and subsequent feedback and advice to 14 headspace sites around Australia.

The participating headspace sites include: Darwin, Mt Isa, Inala, Meadowbrook, Gosford, Dubbo, Penrith, Shepparton, Bendigo, Hobart, Edinburgh North, Port Augusta, and Albany, with arrangements also pending in Broome.

Although IPS WORKS' headquarters is in Perth, by collaborating with Community Mental Health Australia (CMHA), WAAMH's national network of community mental health peak bodies, it will be able to recruit qualified staff and base its services in appropriate locations close to the headspace sites.

The IPS WORKS team is honoured to be selected as the provider of choice to deliver IPS support services to the participating headspace organisations.

For more information on the Individual Placement and Support model and IPS WORKS, please visit: <http://ipsworks.waamh.org.au>

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