



MEDIA RELEASE – 27 June 2024

New early psychosis mental health support for young Canberrans

A new mental health service to support young people who are experiencing an early episode of psychosis, or are at risk of developing psychosis, will open in Canberra later this year.

Capital Health Network (CHN) Acting CEO, Julie Blackburn said headspace Early Psychosis service will provide free and confidential support for young Canberrans (aged 12-25).

“Young people will be able to access free specialist mental health support, in an accessible, youth-friendly environment. This will assist them with everyday life skills and help them to return to study or work. They’ll also have the opportunity to participate in social groups with other young people who have had similar experiences,” said Ms Blackburn.

The headspace Early Psychosis service will be staffed by a large multidisciplinary team that will include specialist trained mental health professionals, clinical case managers, family workers and peer support workers.

As ACT’s Primary Health Network, CHN selected Uniting NSW.ACT to provide the headspace Early Psychosis service, following a competitive open tender process. Uniting currently deliver headspace Early Psychosis services in Western Sydney. Uniting is committed to working closely with local service providers, including the existing headspace services in the ACT, to ensure a positive and integrated service experience.

Uniting NSW.ACT Director of Communities, Dr Andrew Montague said that Uniting NSW.ACT is excited to deliver the first headspace Early Psychosis program in the ACT.

“headspace Early Psychosis supports 12–25 year-olds that are experiencing a first episode of psychosis or are at ultra high risk of developing psychosis. headspace Early Psychosis is all about intervening as early as possible to provide young people with the supports they require to live full healthy lives. Uniting is confident this new service will make a significant impact on young people’s lives in Canberra,” said Dr Montague.

CHN has been working alongside Canberra Health Services to explore opportunities for integrating the headspace Early Psychosis service with existing services to ensure a seamless care journey for young people.

CHN has received over \$14M through the Australian Government’s PHN Program to support headspace Early Psychosis in the ACT.