

GP REFERRED MENTAL HEALTH CARE PLAN

Mental Health is serious and if you are struggling or in need of guidance we suggest you seek a professional for help. Here is a five step process to get you started.

If a student is 16 or over they can see their GP independently, under this age they will need a guardian present.

STEP 1.

CONTACT A GP

Contact your regular GP and book a double appointment to access a mental health care plan (this can be achieved in a standard 15-minute appointment generally, and mention this is what it's for so they get the appropriate person).

STEP 2.

EXPLAIN HOW YOU ARE FEELING

Attend appointment and request a mental health care plan to gain access to a psychologist. Give GP a brief description of why this is necessary (e.g. I am having panic attacks daily and I can't attend school most days because of how overwhelmed I'm feeling, I know I need help).

STEP 3.

HEALTH CARE PLAN

You might have a preferred psychologist's name, address and contact number handy to send the mental health care plan through to. Alternatively, request one from the GP. Get the GP to fax/ mail the mental health care plan through to the selected psychologist.

STEP 4.

MIND THE GAP

A mental health care plan allows \$128.50 for each appointment with the psychologist to be covered by Medicare. Check if the Psychologist accepts bulk billing or if there is a gap payable. You will be entitled to an initial 6 appointments and then will require another trip to the GP to extend the mental health care plan if necessary. You are entitled to 10 appointments per calendar year. As of Jan 1st of each year another set of appointments can be accessed.

STEP 5.

FIND THE RIGHT FIT

Phone the psychologist to make an appointment and make sure you attend! Finding the right psychologist fit for you is like a comfy shoe. If it's not your size and is completely uncomfortable then search for another, if it is your size but just needs a few wears for comfort then you're on the right track.

Note: Understand that it might take a few visits before you start to see some changes. The psychologist should give you the toolkit but you'll need to use them yourself.

FOR IMMEDIATE SUPPORT

If you are dealing with a personal crisis or need immediate advice, counselling and support there are several free and confidential services you can access online or over the phone.

KIDS HELPLINE: 1800 55 1800 LIFELINE: 13 11 14

