

HEALTHY AGEING SERVICE RESPONSE

About the Healthy Ageing Service Response (HASR)

HASR is a service designed to support the healthy ageing of older adults in the north-eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The service is free of charge, funded by Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (EMPHN) and delivered St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne.

Who is the service for?

HASR is for individuals aged 65 years and older (55 years or older for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders) living in the community or in a RACF with, or at risk of, mild to moderate mental health issues who may not otherwise qualify for public mental health services.

HASR has 3 components



1. Phone advice line for clinicians:

Support for GPs and RACFs and for diagnostic clarification, medication advice, therapeutic management strategies and referral pathways.



2. Face to Face (or telehealth) intervention:

Brief period of individual care (≤ 6 sessions) for people with moderate symptoms that are impacting daily functioning. This involves an assessment, developing an agreed action plan and working collaboratively with the person, their treating team and family members to address mental health concerns.



3. Education sessions:

Delivery of education seminars (with CPD) exploring mental illness in older adults, and advice for healthy ageing.

Who is in our support team?

HASR incorporates a multidisciplinary team, including psychologists, mental health nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, psychiatrists, psychiatric registrars and lived experience staff.

Case study examples

A 78 year old widowed female living at home alone, with a history of anxiety. This has been exacerbated in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past two months she has developed recurrent panic attacks, depressed mood, and feelings of hopelessness. She has long term insomnia which has also worsened, but her appetite remains fair. She reports intermittent passive suicidal ideation, no intent. She is now unable to leave the house due to fear of panic attacks, and requires her niece to assist with shopping.

Intervention: primary consultation with assessment and management plan, consideration of escalation to APATT if longer term intervention is required.

An 80 year old male living with his supportive son, he has no past mental health history but is grieving the recent death of his wife, with subsequent symptoms of intermittent low mood and tearfulness. There is no suicidal ideation nor psychotic symptoms. His sleep and appetite are unaffected. He manages all his ADLs independently with some assistance from his son, and can still enjoy things like seeing his grandchildren.

Family have noticed that he appears more withdrawn. He has stopped attending his local bowls club, and hasn't felt able to do his gardening like he normally would.

Intervention: secondary consultation, eg. how to recognise early warning signs for more serious mental health presentation, suggestions for relapse prevention, general wellness advice, alternative services/supports etc.

Referral processes

Referrals directly to the HASR program will be managed through the existing aged mental health services.

Aged Mental Health Service

St Vincent's APATT – Phone: 9231 8443

Local Government Area

Banyule
Whittlesea
Mitchell (part of) *
Nillumbik
Murrindindi (part of) *
Boroondara

* For these Local Government Areas use the [EMPHN Suburb locator](#) and residential street address to determine eligibility.

For urgent mental health intervention please contact the Mental Health Triage Service at your local public mental health service through existing pathways.



Melbourne Health (NWMH Centralised Triage) – Phone: 1300 874 243
St Vincents's Hospital Melbourne - Phone: 1300 558 862

Further questions?

Please email: HASR@svha.org.au



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