

# NECAMHS



**North East Child and Adolescent  
Mental Health Service**

**0260 24 7711      0357 22 4837**

WODONGA REGIONAL  HEALTH SERVICE



## What is North East CAMHS or NECAMHS?

CAMHS stands for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Assistance is provided to young people up to the age of 18 years and their families where the young person is identified as experiencing emotional, behavioural or mental health problems.

We are part of the Wodonga Regional Health Service (WRHS) and we have offices in Wodonga and Wangaratta. NECAMHS is funded by the state government so it is a free service.

Children and young people come to NECAMHS because their problems have begun to interfere with family &/or social relationships and/or their emotional development. Some examples of problems are:

- **BEHAVIOURAL**

Prolonged school refusal, poor self-control, behaviour dangerous to self or others.

- **EMOTIONAL**

Stress, anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts/talk, hallucinations

- **RELATIONSHIPS**

Major difficulties in family or peer relations, social withdrawal, isolation

- **PERSONAL CARE**

Severe sleep disturbance, eating disorders, self-harm, soiling, wetting.

- **NECAMHS coordinates specialist autism assessments**

- **NECAMHS runs Kids Early Action in Schools Programme in conjunction with schools for children in prep-Grade 3 showing early signs of significant behaviour problems.**

## **NECAMHS is a team of specialists.**

The workers who see young people at our service are trained health professionals who specialise in child and adolescent mental health, and include a child and adolescent psychiatrist, psychologists, psychiatric nurses, occupational therapists and social workers. Some workers have additional qualifications in family therapy and play therapy. NECAMHS also has a carer consultant who can act as an additional support and advocate on your behalf.

## **What people say to a clinician is confidential.**

That means it won't be passed on to someone else unless you say it is O.K. or unless you or someone else is at risk of being hurt.

**While the child or adolescent is the focus of our service, in many ways all family members are our clients. And, no matter what the child's age, parents and other caregivers are always seen as important partners and are given any information they need in order to care for the child. Permission from the young person is not required for this information to be passed on.**

## **What happens to the information you give ?**

When you attend a Victorian public hospital or clinic such as NECAMHS, workers collect information about you, your illness and some family details. The workers keep a written record of your information and keep details of on-going care in a locked file

Information including details such as your age, diagnosis and the outcomes of treatment is stored on a Victoria wide computer system called "RAPID". If you go to another public mental health service, information about previous treatments can be obtained by the new workers from the RAPID system.

You are not legally required to provide information to mental health workers, but it does help in your treatment. Accurate information also helps us to develop better mental health services.

# Your Rights

## What is a right?

**Rights are about needs. Something is a right if people need it to help them live.** Staff at NECAMHS will help you understand your rights within the mental health system and will encourage you to speak up if you think these aren't being respected.

The following list of rights has been developed with a group of young people who have used Child and Adolescent Mental Health. Some are rights that you (or your parents on your behalf) have according to the law.

**People who come to NECAMHS have rights in the following areas:**

### Information

- Getting the information you need about the service when you need it
- Having your rights explained to you when you first go to the service
- Being told what will happen during your involvement with the service
- Knowing how to get help when the clinic is closed
- Knowing what information will be collected and why
- Being able to see what's written about you the NECAMHS file (though you need a special application to do this, Ask your clinician for details. Some types of information aren't generally shown to clients, even when they are allowed to see information in their NECAMHS file.)

### Privacy

- Having your privacy respected as much as possible
- Saying what information is given out to various people about you, except where information about your treatment is required by people caring for you, for example, parents or teachers.

### Getting Help

- Having someone help you when you are in a crisis

## • **Choice and Participation**

- Have a say in what is happening to you.
- Being involved in planning how the service can best help you
- Being able to say 'no' when asked to be part of a research project, including research about new medications
- Being able to seek legal advice
- Have someone that you love or trust with you.
- Being able to ask for a different worker or a second opinion.
- Spend time on your own with your worker if you want to

## **Respect**

- Not being talked down to (patronised or belittled)
- Being able to explain what you need and have that heard and respected
- Being allowed to ask questions and receiving answers that you can understand
- Having your special needs respected in areas such as religious beliefs, cultural values and practices (things about your family background) , and language

## **Making a Complaint**

- Being given information about how to make a complaint (start by talking with the worker involved or their team leader)
- Being able to tell us if you are not happy with the service
- Get a response from us within 2 weeks if you make a complaint.

## **Make the most from NECAMHS by:**

- Respecting the rights of others
- Be the best person you can
- Take care of yourself the best way you can
- Make the best choices you can
- Tell people when you are unhappy about something
- Tell your worker when you don't understand something
- Be honest with you parents/carers and the people working with you
- Listen to what is being said to you
- Try to follow suggestions made by the people working with you
- Stand up for yourself and say no if you need to

## **While you and your family are using NECAMHS, you have the responsibility to:**

- Give NECAMHS workers enough correct information so that they can best help you and your family.
- Let us know if you are going to be late or can't come to your appointment, or if you no longer need or want the service.
- Treat staff and other visitors to the service and service property with care and with respect.

## **Let us know if you are not happy.**

If you are not happy with the service you are receiving, the first person you can speak to is your treating worker. Some people may wish to speak to the service manager or the Carer Consultant. You may prefer to put your complaint in writing to any of these people and they will make contact with you. Their contact details are on Pg 10 of this booklet.

You can also write to the Chief Executive Officer of the Wodonga Regional Health Service:

The Chief Executive Officer  
WRHS.

P.O. Box 156  
WODONGA. 3689

Or make an external complaint to:

The Victorian Health Services Commission  
1800 136 066

## What will happen if you contact NECAMHS?

### The Referral

- When a young person or family member first contact us, the intake worker will ask questions to find out what issues and concerns you are facing. The referral worker needs this information to decide whether we are the most suitable service for you.
- We try to understand the problems you are having and how they may best be resolved.
- If it is decided that NECAMHS is not the service that would best meet your needs, we will try to put you in contact with another service who could.
- If you are already receiving help from another service, we will endeavour to work in closely with them too.

### Assessment and planning

- If it is decided that NECAMHS is the best service, the referral worker will advise you about how we will commence an assessment. The time this takes can vary depending on the urgency/severity of your need and our waiting list at that time. There are usually two clinicians involved in this.
- At an assessment, family members and the young person will also be required to complete some forms to help get everyone's views on what they see the problem as being. Your clinician then writes up a report of the assessment. This includes a written plan (called the Individual Service Plan or ISP). It describes how our service will work with you to help you meet the identified goals and deal with your issues. The ISP will be either written and/or discussed fully with you and your family so everyone is clear about what to expect.

## Treatment

- When treatment begins you will be given a worker who becomes your primary link to our service.
- Treatment can involve individual counselling with the young person, family therapy and parent meetings. Treatment usually involves regular appointments to talk about issues or use other activities like questionnaires, drawing or sand or play to help people express themselves.
- The worker may ask permission to discuss your situation with other people that can help - like the welfare co-ordinator at school. Sometimes your worker will recommend involving another staff member of NECAMHS who may have some specialist skills that could assist you.
- If you need extra help or advice between appointments, ring NECAMHS and ask to speak to the worker you normally see. If they are unavailable, you will be asked if someone else can assist and if so, you will be put on to another clinician.

## Progress and Review

Your progress will be reviewed regularly.

## Discharge

You and your worker will determine when treatment with NECAMHS has been enough. Ongoing support for you after this time and how to contact the service again will be discussed.

You may be contacted and asked to participate in an evaluation survey at a later date. This feedback helps us to respond better to young people's and families' needs.

## **Specialist services: Hospital**

Sometimes it is decided that treatment would be best provided in a hospital and young people are given care from one of our local paediatric wards either at Wangaratta hospital (Northeast Health) or Albury Base Hospital. This can be done if a brief break from the home or social environment would assist a mental health concern or for physical health reasons.

If it is recommended that a young person would benefit from a specialist programme with other young people who have similar difficulties, the NECAMHS worker will make a referral to one of the specialist child or adolescent units.

For a child up to and including the age of 12, the specialist unit is located at the Austin hospital. Young people 13 to 18, are admitted to the Maroondah hospital in Box Hill.

Your worker at NECAMHS would remain in contact with you while you are in hospital and would also be involved in planning for you to come home. There is an expectation that family members will be involved in the therapy that specialist units provide.

## **Autism Spectrum Disorder Assessments**

NECAMHS also co-ordinates multidisciplinary assessments for children and young people who may have an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Referrals for an autism assessment are made through the referral worker who will then pass the initial details on to either of our two autism service co-ordinators. One of these clinicians will then make contact with the family and commence that assessment process. This is separate to the general clinical assessment and treatment process at NECAMHS.

## **Kids Early Action Programme in Schools (KEAPS)**

KEAPS is part of a statewide network of CAMHS and Schools Early Actions programmes (CASEA) where CAMHS clinicians, in conjunction with school staff, run programmes for parents and students prep to Gr 3 who are having difficulty controlling their behaviour. Teachers are given assistance in how to manage difficult behaviours too so everyone is working together to prevent behaviours getting worse.

## **After hours Services:**

After hours mental health services are available to you. The NECAMHS office operates on weekdays between 8.30 a.m. and 5 p.m. The adult community mental health teams in Wangaratta and Wodonga provide an after hours crisis services overnight, on weekends and public holidays.

They can be contacted either by you going to the Accident and Emergency departments of your local hospital or by phone directly on **1300 881104**. Your call will be answered by the mental health triage nurse at the Kerferd unit at Wangaratta who will discuss your concerns with you over the phone. If after discussion, the worker may consider that a face to face discussion with a mental health worker would be useful, the Kerferd triage nurse will organise this with you or your parents.

The adult services will let your NECAMHS clinician know of any after hours contact as soon as possible during the next working day.

## We're keen to have you involved in our service

NECAMHS has a Consumer and Carer person. In the past a group of consumer/carers have met in either Wodonga Beechworth or Wangaratta. If there is a need for this to happen in the future this can be reconvened.

The aim of this group was to:

- Bring together people who are interested in having a voice in the mental health system, particularly child and adolescent mental health services
- Provide opportunities to meet other consumers and carers of NECAMHS
- Influence how NECAMHS continues to develop
- Advocate for improvements to CAMHS services locally and beyond.

Meetings provided information through discussion and guest speakers and special events. Consumers and carers also have an opportunity to meet with NECAMHS staff and give feedback to the service. Ask your clinician for information about this or contact:

- Dianne Hoffard Consumer and carer volunteer  
03 5721 6 e-mail: [dianneh@iinet.net.au](mailto:dianneh@iinet.net.au)
- Ros Robertson WRHS carer consultant  
02 6056 5803 e-mail: [roslyn.robertson@wrhs.org.au](mailto:roslyn.robertson@wrhs.org.au)
- Lisa Gundish Manager, NECAMHS  
02 6024 7711 Wodonga 03 5722 4837 Wangaratta  
e-mail: [lisa.gundish@wrhs.org.au](mailto:lisa.gundish@wrhs.org.au)

You do not need to be a current or even a past user of the service to be a part of this group. Just having an interest is enough.

## Some Supports, Resources and Contacts

Local councils and community health centres are a good place to start to try and find a service you may need. Community health centres provide a range of general health services including counselling, drug and alcohol services. Community health services in the eastern Hume region are:

### Upper Hume Community Health Centre

02 6022 8888

### Ovens and King Community Health Centre

Wangaratta 03 5723 2000

Bright 03 57 55 0123

Moyhu 03 57 27 9324

Myrtleford 03 57 31 3500

### Upper Murray Health and Community Services

Phone 02 6076 1733

### Tallangatta Health Services

Phone 02 6071 5200

### Benalla Community Care

Phone 03 5762 2299

### Mansfield Community Health Service

Phone 03 5775 1933

### After hours crisis support

- If you need to speak to someone after hours contact 1300 881104
- or
- Go to the emergency department of your nearest hospital

### Other useful agencies are:

#### North East Support and Action for Youth NESAY

Phone 03 5721 7006

Mediation, general youth and family support, art and music programmes.

#### Upper Murray Family Care

Phone 02 6022 0000

03 5723 4000

Family counselling,  
family support, foster care etc.

**Kids Help line**

Phone 1800 55 1800

A free national telephone service for young people aged between 5-18 yrs

**Parent line**

Phone 132 289

A telephone counselling service for parents of children 0-18 yrs offering counselling and referral.

**Supporting Kids**

Phone 02 6022 8000

03 5723 4000

Supporting children of parents with mental health problems.

**Lifeline**

Phone 131 114

For people experiencing difficulty in coping and who need to talk to someone confidentially and anonymously. 24 hour service.

**SANE Help line**

Phone 1800 688 382

Offers information and referral about mental health issues .  
9-5 weekdays

**Rural Adolescent Programme**

Phone 03 5750 0501

Early intervention and prevention of mental health problems for young people 12-18 through individual and family counselling. Available to people living in the Alpine Shire.

**Central Hume Support Services CHSS**

Phone 02 6024 2922

Youth counselling, general and intensive support and crisis and supported accommodation for young people.

**Upper Murray Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA)**

Phone 1800 622 016

Counselling support for recent and past sexual assault

**Department Of Human Services**

Child Protection Intake Worker  
Phone 1800 650 227



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Further copies are available from the NECAMHS office on  
(02) 6024 7711. (03) 5722 4837

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