

nursing specialty

Mental Health Service

Introduction

South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Health (SESIH) covers a very large geographical area extending from Sydney Harbour in the north, across to the eastern and southern suburbs into the Illawarra, along the picturesque south coast and beyond Nowra. Within this area there is considerable population diversity, both in socio economic and cultural terms. Also represented are communities with more specific needs such as the homeless, predominantly Aboriginal communities and those living with HIV.

Service Overview

Our mental health staff currently provide a comprehensive range of services that are underpinned by a population health needs model. They include: inpatient units where acutely ill people are admitted for a range of mental health conditions, community acute care teams, non acute teams, longer term case management teams, rehabilitation teams and specialised services in psychological interventions for children, adolescents and older adults.

Mental health in SESIH is structured for delivery by a dedicated group of health care professionals including nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists and many others. The site-based services comprise both inpatient programs and community teams. Not surprisingly, mental health services across the country, and specifically in SESIH, are undergoing rapid expansion to meet the ever increasing demands of the community.

Service Profiles

Acute inpatient units

These cater for the admission of people presenting with a range of mental health conditions and are located within the following hospitals:

- Prince of Wales Hospital (for Sydney's Eastern Suburbs) where there are beds for general acute admissions, observation, older adults, tertiary neuropsychiatry patients and a Psychiatric Emergency Care Centre (PECC).
- Sydney Children's Hospital where there are beds for children and adolescents. A purpose built mental health adolescent ward is also in the planning stage.

- St George Hospital where there are beds for observation, general acute and older adults and a PECC. A substantial rehabilitation unit is being planned.
- St Vincent's Hospital where there are beds for general acute admissions and a PECC. The redevelopment of the outlying Caritas Mental Health Service will be occurring in 2008.
- Sutherland Hospital where there are beds for observation, general acute and older adult admissions. A rehabilitation unit with a specialist component for adolescents will be added in 2008.
- Shellharbour Hospital where there are beds for observation, general acute admissions. A rehabilitation unit is also being established.
- Wollongong Hospital where there are beds for general acute admissions only at this time. An acute older persons unit is scheduled to open in 2008 and a PECC is being planned.

Community Mental Health

Community Mental Health Services, including acute care teams, are located throughout the Area.

Rehabilitation Services

There is supported residential rehabilitation provided within the community. An inpatient mental health rehabilitation unit is based at the Prince of Wales Hospital. The Housing Accommodation Support Initiative (HASI) provides supported accommodation places for clients accessing Mental Health Services within SESIH and support ranges from low to high level.

Child and Adolescent Services

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) provides assessment, support, short term interventions and referral services for children and their families for social, emotional and behavioural problems. These services are typically provided in close partnership with other hospital and community health services, and include outreach services. A tertiary level acute child and adolescent mental health inpatient service is based at Sydney Children's Hospital and further beds are planned at Shellharbour Hospital along with an Adolescent Day Program.

Tertiary and State-wide Services

A Mood Disorders Unit is located at the Prince of Wales Hospital together with a Neuropsychiatric Disorders Unit, and an Anxiety Disorders Unit is based at St Vincent's Hospital. These units take referrals from all over the State.

Why not consider joining the Mental Health Services Team?

Broad ranging opportunities

The tremendous scope and variety of mental health services available in SESIH could make working in the team very appealing to health professionals who are experienced in this specialty and looking for a change. The expansion of services outlined above means also that employment prospects, both currently and into the future, are excellent.

Employment principles

SESIH has a strong commitment to equal opportunity employment and to fair and equitable provision of resources, promoting a work environment where everyone is treated with respect, fairness, equality and dignity. We also have a commitment to the principles of cultural diversity and encourage people from diverse backgrounds to join our workforce.

Work practices

Work practices are flexible and allow staff to balance their many responsibilities. All staff employed in mental health are required to participate in clinical supervision as a form of professional growth and development. Clinical supervision involves regular and in-depth discussion and review of a person's clinical work by a colleague who possesses clinical and supervisory expertise.

Education culture

SESIH prides itself on a culture of education and, over the years, has established affiliations with a number of universities, in particular the University of Technology, Sydney and the University of Wollongong. These partnerships have facilitated the development of Area-wide programs for staff wanting to move into and/or specialise in this field, which attract credit points towards graduate level studies at either of the universities.

Allied health and nursing students on placement, or those who are qualified and working within the SESIH Mental Health Service, enjoy the benefits of a workplace philosophy which has a strong client and carer focus and which uses an approach aimed at building the capability and competency of both individual team members and the team as a whole. Each of the professions within the multidisciplinary team contributes to the range of skills required in assessment, planning and coordination of care.

Employment opportunities

The SESIH Mental Health Service is currently recruiting staff for a number of exciting new initiatives and service developments across all specialty areas. These include older persons, psychiatric emergency care centres (PECC), community mental health, rehabilitation and child and adolescent services. Whatever your passion, we have something for you.

Find out more

Positions are advertised regularly in the Thursday edition, and occasionally the Saturday edition, of the Sydney Morning Herald, and in local newspapers. They are also published on the following websites:

SESIH Corporate website:
www.sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au/employment/

NSW Department of Health website:
www.health.nsw.gov.au/jobs/

For information on the SESIH Mental Health Service visit:
www.sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au/mental_health_services/

For the opportunity to discuss your employment options contact:

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