

Alcohol, Drugs & Mental Health Services

Navigators Guide

Many people with mental illness have a drug and/or alcohol problem, often called co-morbidity or dual diagnosis. It is important to address both at the same time and for this reason in some regions there are specific dual diagnosis services.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

People with a dual diagnosis mental illness and drug and/or alcohol problem may be referred to the local community mental health service¹ or inpatient unit² depending on severity. Mental health teams in all regions are trained to care for people with a dual diagnosis, routinely commencing with both a mental health and drug and alcohol assessment.

Care may be

- ❖ Coordinated and managed by the local service which may have a drug and alcohol case worker
- ❖ Delivered by staff trained in dual diagnosis
- ❖ Supported by specialist consultancy services provided by the Dual Diagnosis Service in Newcastle
- ❖ Referred to a local Alcohol and Drug Service in Hunter New England Health, especially if the most urgent need or first stage of treatment is for detoxification from drugs and alcohol.

The Dual Diagnosis Service located in Newcastle provides inpatient specialist care, where a combined approach is adopted, however this may not be convenient for people living further away, where distance from family and local services is likely to be an issue.

There may be local non-clinical support services and programs in your area offered by a non-government organization (NGO) eg, Alcoholics Anonymous. Your local mental health team will be able to assist with information and advice.

Dual Diagnosis Services in Hunter New England Region

The Dual Diagnosis Service provides a range of treatment and education services to people who have both mental health and drug and alcohol problems. There are two clinical units of the dual diagnosis service.

Mental Health and Substance Use Unit

is a 22 bed acute psychiatric unit located at the Mater Mental Health Centre. The Unit provides integrated treatment for people who have been admitted to Hospital suffering from psychosis and recent substance use. This includes assessment identification, management and treatment of mental health and substance use problems. All admissions to Mental Health Substance Use Unit are via the Emergency Department at the Mater Hospital (ED).³

The Mental Health Substance Use Service

is a centre-based Community Mental Health Service (located at McAuley Centre). They offer group based programs for individuals with a Dual Diagnosis. These include motivational groups for inpatients, psycho-education groups and support, groups for clients and their families.

Mental Health Substance Use Service
(02) 4033 5600
1800 655 085 (Newcastle 24 hr hotline)
H.N.E. Mental Health 02 40 335 000

¹ See Community Mental Health Services NG3

² See Adult Hospital Inpatient Services NG4

³ See What to Do in Emergency or Crisis NG2

ALCOHOL & DRUG SERVICES

People may be referred to alcohol and drug services in Hunter New England Health and other agencies. There is collaboration between these services and mental health, where indicated.

HNE Drug and Alcohol Services

Drug & Alcohol Clinical Services

Central Intake – Northern Region
1300 660 059

Central Intake – Southern Region
(02) 4923 2060

Alcohol & Drug Unit
Calvary Mater Hospital
(02) 4014 4796

Lakeview Withdrawal Services –
Belmont Hospital (02) 4923 2060

Opioid Treatment Program
N.C.H.C. (02) 4016 4514

Stimulant Treatment Program
(02) 4923 6776

Cannabis Clinic
(02) 4923 6760

WHAT CAN FAMILY AND FRIENDS DO? Families and friends need information and strategies to support them - to deal with difficult and disruptive behaviour that may result from substance use and mental health problems.

Common issues for families

- ❖ Difficulties dealing with stress and problem solving
- ❖ Crisis and chaos within the family
- ❖ Self-blame and guilt
- ❖ Homelessness
- ❖ Financial difficulties – unemployment
- ❖ Guilt and Stigma
- ❖ Relationship breakdown
- ❖ Inappropriate behaviour
- ❖ Boundary setting
- ❖ Emotional distress
- ❖ Domestic Violence

Some general tips

- ❖ Mean what you say

- ❖ Be consistent and firm - Don't give up, improvement/gains may be short lived
- ❖ Avoid making decisions under pressure
- ❖ Don't get into arguments, avoid threats
- ❖ Follow through on what you say
- ❖ It is important for all to reflect on family values and behaviour
- ❖ Maintain touch with helpful services
- ❖ Consider alternative accommodation arrangements or respite (for either party)
- ❖ Set clear boundaries and realistic expectations to encourage change.
- ❖ Families may need access to outside help and support to cope with difficult emotions, events and circumstances
- ❖ The impact on families can be minimized by learning appropriate management and coping strategies
- ❖ Encourage positive behaviour
- ❖ Take care of yourself and your own health

When setting limits expect some resistance. This may be unpleasant to deal with but essential to understand. **Do Not** put yourself in danger when following through. If your personal safety is threatened or home damaged due to violence or aggression, call the police. Consider an AVO (Apprehended Violence Order), conditions can be specified. This may seem like an extreme measure, but sometimes the only means to manage threatening and dangerous behaviour and stay safe.

Rehabilitation Services

Salvation Army (02) 4961 1257
Who's – Allandale/Cessnock
(02) 4991 7000
Roy Thorne Rehabilitation Service
(02) 6752 2248

Other Services

ADIS (Alcohol & Drug Information Services) 1800 422 599
Alcoholics Anonymous, Hunter
(02) 4962 3844
Narcotics Anonymous, Hunter
(02) 4969 6767
Alanon/Alateen 1300 252 666
Nar Anon 1300 652 820
Awabakal Medical Centre (02) 4969 2424