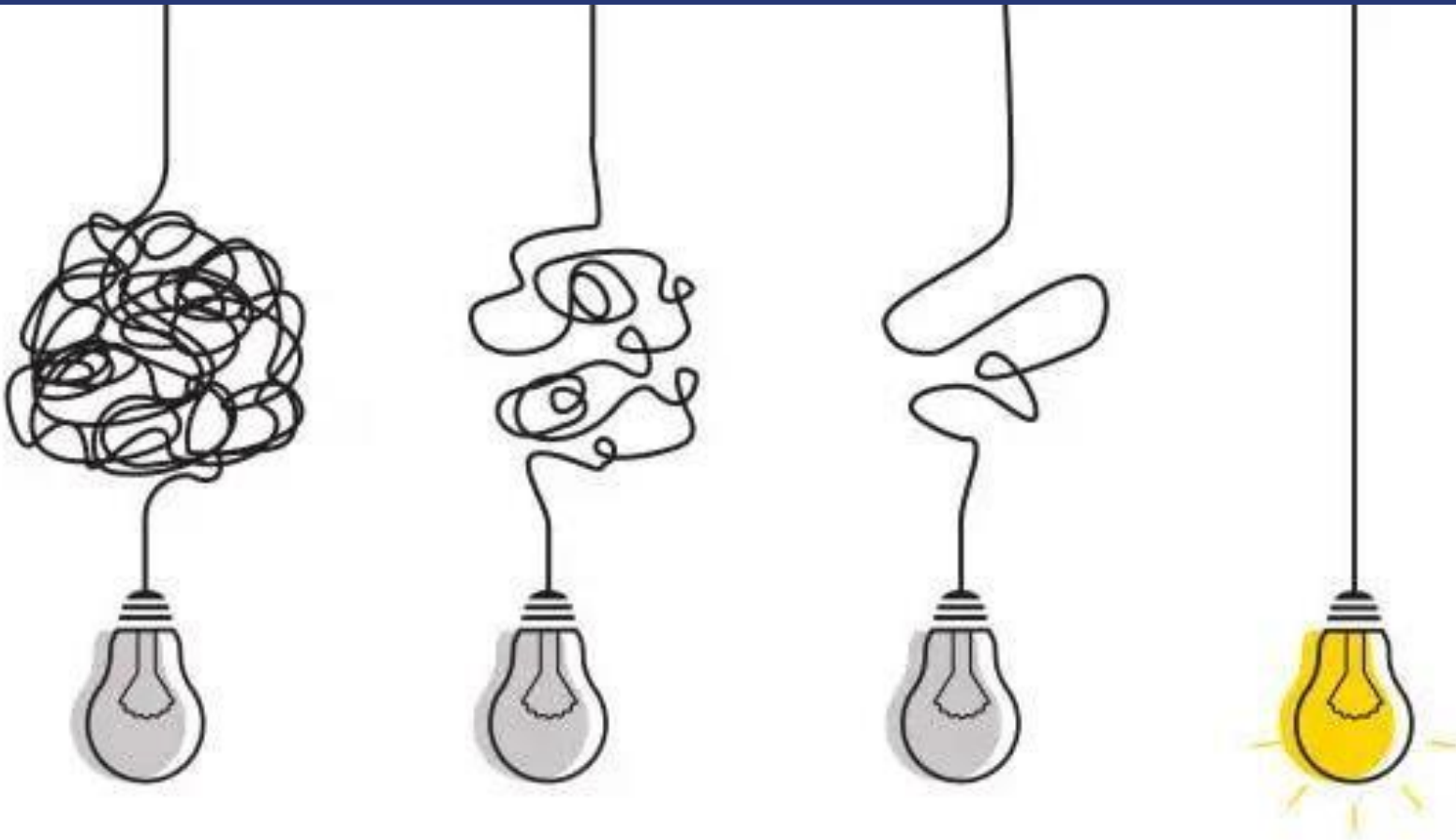




ACT
Government

Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing Work Plan

2024-2025



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Purpose and Origins

The Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing (the Office) was established in 2018 with the purpose to lead, promote and influence to improve mental health outcomes for the people of the ACT community. The Office is a change agent that supports the ACT Government's commitment to a whole-of-community, integrated approach to mental health and wellbeing, and suicide prevention.

The Coordinator-General for mental health and wellbeing reports directly to the Minister for Mental Health and the Office has a mandate to work across all Government agencies. The Office retains a level of independence from the day-to-day running of ACT Health and has authority to conduct reviews and produce reports as the Coordinator-General deems necessary, or at the request of the Minister for Mental Health.

The Office's positive working relationships with the ACT mental health sector, the broader community, and within government, have been key drivers for leading change projects with and for the sector.

The work of the Office is guided by the community co-designed ACT vision for mental health:

*A kind, connected and informed community working together
to promote and protect the mental health and wellbeing of all.*



This tree represents strength through collaboration. A community that builds on input from a diverse range of people, is grounded and grows together. Together, we'll improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Canberrans.

Evaluation of the Office (2024)

Delivering on the commitment to evaluate the Office five years after launch, an evaluation was completed in 2023. In this evaluation, KPMG were commissioned to:

- consider the effectiveness and quality of the Office model and functions;
- consider the achievements through the Office Work Plan and other key projects; and
- review the Coordinator-General role.

A summary the evaluation findings is outlined in the table below:

<i>Achievements of the Office</i>	<i>Model Functions and Resourcing</i>	<i>Coordinator-General Role</i>
<p>The Office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has developed a strong ability to build strategic relationships. • effectively brings partners together to work towards collective actions. • has upheld a strong focus on collaboration. • has achieved most deliverables in it's work plans and progressed other activities in response to unanticipated priorities and circumstances (e.g. COVID19). 	<p>The role and purpose of the Office has remained consistent. Specifically, the Office:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has influenced system change and whole of government and whole of community coordination and collaboration; • had a clear role in commissioning for innovation and sponsoring enhancement in services; and • is considered by stakeholders as being semi-independent 	<p>Key to the success of the position is the level of seniority and direct line to the Minister for Mental Health. This has meant the Coordinator-General has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided leadership and oversight of the Office; • influenced for system change and reform; • built credibility in the sector and relationships across government; and • supported increasing the profile of mental health and wellbeing in the ACT.

The Evaluation made 7 key recommendations to guide the future of the Office:

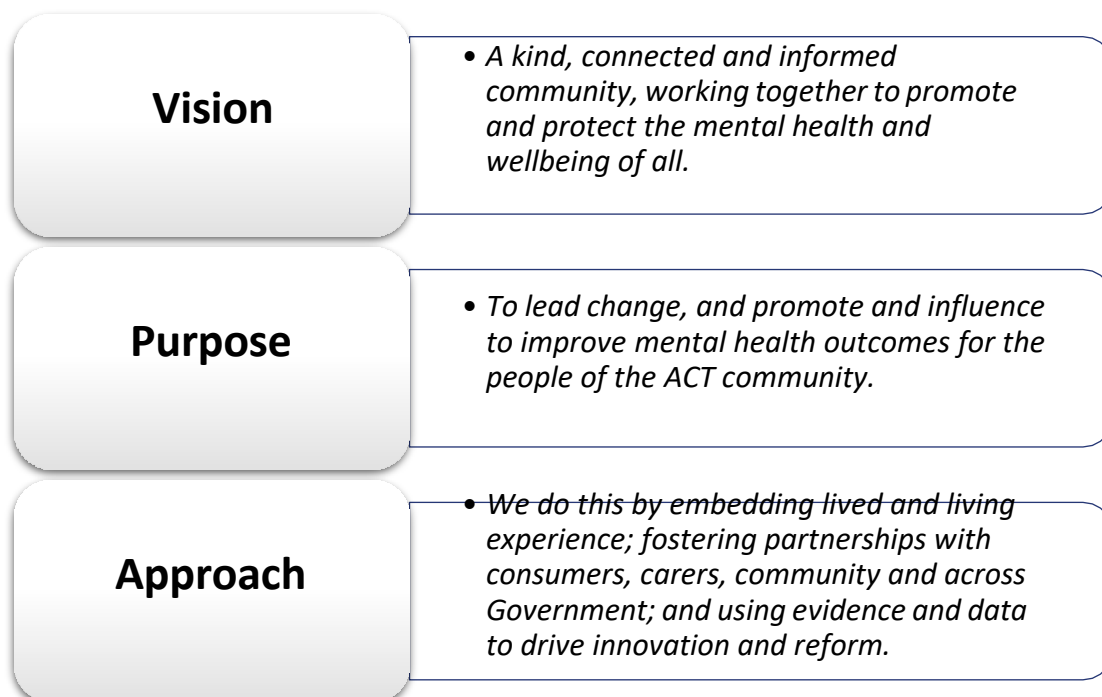
1. Explore a refresh of the Office's model and clearly communicate the role of the Office.
2. Develop and implement guidelines and principles for commissioning projects.
3. Investigate opportunities to expand capacity.

4. Prioritise work on wellbeing in the ACT at a whole of government level.
5. Explore succession planning for the Coordinator General role.
6. Explore a revised approach to Office strategic and operational planning to reflect the refreshed Office model and consolidate the Office's work.
7. Continue implementation of the in-progress mid-term review recommendations.

The final evaluation can be accessed [here](#).

Revised Model

In response to the recommendations of the Evaluation, a revised model and approach has been developed for the Office as follows:



Key Functions

Key functions of the Office under the revised model will include:

Facilitate, Influence & Advise

- We work in partnerships and take a whole of person, whole of community, whole of Government approach.
- We facilitate, influence and advise towards improving mental health, and promoting wellbeing by focussing on areas that impact mental health.

Awareness Raising

- We undertake awareness raising, promote conversations and coordinate action on:
- prevention of mental illness and suicidality,
- promotion of wellbeing, and
- reduction of stigma and discrimination.

Research & Knowledge Translation

- We use, create and disseminate evidence to drive innovation and reform.

Outcomes

The office aims to influence the following key outcomes, organised under the priority areas identified in the Office's 'Towards our Vision: Taking A Strategic Approach to Mental Health in the ACT':

- Increased awareness
- Reduced stigma
- Reduced violence
- Increased safety
- Increased housing stability
- Improved economic and social participation

Enhanced Individual Lives




- Reduced harm
- Improved mental health and wellbeing
- Increased mental health literacy and awareness

Mentally Healthy Communities



- Shared responsibility and collaborative action
- Enhanced workforce capacity, capability and diversity
- Increased innovation
- Mental health and suicide prevention reform, in line with evidence and best practice

Improved System Capacity and Capability



2024 - 2025 Work Plan

The Office has had two previous workplans (2019-2021 and 2023-24) and a Mid-term Review (2020) to ensure that the Office was progressing in line with its intended purpose.

This Work Plan outlines current commitments to continue working to enhance the mental health and wellbeing of our community, bringing together commitments publicly made from the 2024-25 from the ACT Health Annual Report.

We will continue to work in partnership with government agencies, non-government organisations (NGOs), parents and carers, people with lived experience and the broader community to ensure we address the social determinants of health and the impact these can have on our mental health and wellbeing.

Action Areas

The sections below outline key areas of focus for the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing for 2024-25.

Communication and Partnerships

The Office collectively will:

- Continue to deliver positive, evidence-informed community messaging to promote mental health through a range of communication channels, and support Mental Health Week in October.
- Focus on messages that promote mental health and address stigma and discrimination in relation to mental illness.
- Continue to promote and develop strategic partnerships to support innovation, system reform and collaborative action, including partnerships with the:
 - Child & Youth Mental Health Sector Alliance;
 - Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drug and Mental Health Alliance; and
 - Suicide Prevention and Lived Experience forums.

Lived Experience

The Office Lived Experience stream will:

- Progress and use findings from mapping and community development efforts to provide oversight and best practice documentation and strategies.
- Grow and support key co-production and lived experience inclusion mechanisms.
- Progress the development of best practice guidance including frameworks and robust structures for lived experience governance.

- Broaden lived experience inclusion by entering a partnership agreement with the ACACIA Lived Experience Research Unit at the Australian National University to validate lived experience inclusion, including peer work strategies and guidance in the ACT.

Strategic Priorities

The Office Strategic Priorities stream will:

- Continue to work in partnership with the Youth Coalition of the ACT and the Capital Health Network to progress sector reforms to enhance the delivery of coordinated and connected child and youth mental health services, through the Child and Youth Mental Health Sector Alliance (CYMHSA).
- Work in partnership with ATODA and Mental Health Community Coalition ACT (MHCC) to identify and progress sector reforms to enhance the interface and connections between alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) and mental health services (MH) through the ATOD - MH Alliance.
- Work with key stakeholders to understand how the mental health and support needs of the ACT's culturally and linguistically diverse communities can be better supported.
- Continue to promote and advocate for safe and accessible mental health services for LGBTIQ+ people.
- Provide oversight to progress and implement Phase Two (2024–2026) of Towards our Vision: Re-envisioning Older Persons Mental Health and Wellbeing in the ACT Strategy 2022–2026.
- Work with the Mental Health Coordinating Group to ensure a whole-of-ACT-mental health system approach to deliver the ACT Mental Health Workforce Strategy and develop future work plans and action frameworks to support the ACT's need for a highly skilled and diverse mental health workforce.

ACT Suicide Prevention

The Office's Suicide Prevention stream will:

- Continue the multi-faceted approach to suicide prevention with a focus on priority and at-risk population groups.
- Continue to work in partnership with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Partnership Group, Thirrili, and other key individuals and organisations from across ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to improve outcomes across mental health and suicide prevention.
- Continue to improve services and supports for individuals and their families and carers following a suicide attempt and/or people who are experiencing suicidal crisis.
- Support the implementation of Connecting with People (CwP) in the non-government sector; and convene a revised CwP Partnership Group to provide an open forum for

stakeholders to discuss, plan for and support the CwP training framework as it continues to roll out in the ACT.

- Work in partnership with organisations, services and individuals across the ACT to provide collaborative leadership to reduce suicide in the ACT.
- Continue to work with national and jurisdictional partners on the draft National Suicide Prevention Strategy (the Strategy), coordinate ACT-based consultations on the Strategy and lead the implementation of the final Strategy in the ACT.

Data Analysis & Research

The Office's Data Analysis & Research stream will:

- Continue an analysis of youth mental health needs in ACT, and identification of key factors in mental health development in young people, and key factors for early intervention and prevention, in collaboration with the Australian National University and the ACT Education Directorate.
- Incorporate revised and improved methods of identification of mental health and suicide/self-harm into routine reporting and use for services planning, monitoring and reform.
- Analyse mental health data sources to provide targeted evidence of the effectiveness of service reform, and new and existing services where applicable and appropriate.
- Provide a systems overview on the use of data and information in mental health services that includes the community sector, NGOs, primary care, public and, where possible, private mental health services.
- Further develop Digital Health Record (DHR) access and analysis of mental health data in the new public system.
- Explore ways to evaluate the impact of mental health policies and programs.
- Engage in monitoring and research activities that support evidence-based planning of mental health activities across the ACT Government.

Ongoing Activities

The Office will also continue its overarching and ongoing activities including:

Mentally Healthy Communities

- Continue to promote positive mental health and wellbeing messaging with a focus on proactively responding to emerging issues arising for priority population groups.
- Continue the enhancement and capacity of MindMap and respond to evaluation feedback.

- Work closely with the Office for LGBTIQ+ Affairs and key stakeholders to promote mental health of the LGBTIQ+ community and identify and promote activities that address the drivers of poor mental health.

Enhancing Lives

- Continue to lead, in partnership with the Youth Coalition of the ACT and Capital Health Network, the development of a ACT Child and Youth Mental Health Sector Alliance.
- Oversee the progress and implement actions under the Older Person's Mental Health Strategy.
- Continue to promote actions aimed to improve individual, family and community outcomes for people who experience both mental health and AOD issues.

Structural and System Capacity

- Finalise the Mental Health Outcomes Framework and undertake the first outcomes analysis.
- Work with ACT Health's Mental Health Policy and Strategy branch to improve the interface between mental health and AOD services.

Research, Evaluation and Quality Improvement

- Research, Evaluation and Quality Improvement Trial processes for in depth data analysis to inform mental health service practice and innovation
- Finalise the Right care, first time, where you live youth modelling tool with the ACT community.
- Continue to promote and support key data linkage projects to improve our understanding of identified priority areas.

Suicide Prevention

- Continue a priority focus on multifaceted approaches to suicide prevention in the ACT.
- Continue to support the design and implementation of Suicide Prevention activities in the ACT that reflect the needs and issues of the diverse ACT Community (e.g. the provision of universal and targeted training; strengthening access and support pathways; and collaborations with key partners and communities to identify and respond to systems gaps and challenges). Key partners include people with lived experience of suicide, people who identify as carers, members of ACT communities, the ACT Coroner's Office, ACT Government services, Capital Health Network, and Non-Government Organisations.
- Continue to work in partnership with the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Partnership Group, and other key individuals and organisations from across the ACT's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to improve outcomes across mental health and suicide prevention.

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.



Our Health Journey artwork by Lynnice Church, Ngunnawal, Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi, 2020.

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