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# Primary Mental Health Care Programs Access to Allied Psychological Services (ATAPS) and *headspace*

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## **History/Timeline**

2003- ATAPS established

2004- Youth Mental Health Initiative (headspace) commenced

2006 - Better Access commenced. ATAPS continued (closely monitored)

2009-10 – Review of ATAPS

2010 - Flexible Care Packages announced

2011 – 1 April – Flexible Care packages commence under ATAPS



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## **How ATAPS Works**

- Funding provided to all Divisions of General Practice as fundholders
- Divisions purchase AHW services – mixture of vouchers, salaries, sessional payments
- Guidelines set forth what services can be provided by whom to whom
- Department does not directly employ AHWs



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## **What ATAPS is.**

- ATAPS allows GPs to refer patients diagnosed as having a mental health disorder for short term focused psychological strategies provided by an allied health professional (AHP)
- Eligibility and treatment are the same under ATAPS as under Better Access.
- No or minimal co-payment by the client. And ATAPS targets hard to reach groups unlikely to access Medicare
- AHPs include social workers, mental health nurses, occupational therapists, clinical psychologists, psychologists and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health Workers with skills and experience in providing psychological services



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## ATAPS funding structure

- **Tier 1** - Traditional ATAPS – short term focused psychological strategies for people whose needs not met by Medicare based services – focus on mild to moderate
- **Tier 2** – Some extra flexibilities and ‘special purpose’ resources targeted to the needs of particular groups who need different pathways and service model. Still assumes mild to moderate illness/needs.
- **And from 1 April.....Tier 3?** Flexible care packages - Significant new flexibility in terms of number and mix of services for severe illness. A different model of care to tailor to individual needs and complement other service pathways.



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## **Flexible Care Packages for People with Severe Mental Illness – What are they?**

- New 'tier 3' of ATAPS to better support people with severe mental illness who rely on primary care for their services
- Packages to include psychological services, clinical case management, close liaison with GPs/psychiatrists, better links with other non clinical services eg Support for Day to Day Living program
- Detail yet to be developed through consultation
- Packages will be available from 1 April 2011



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## **The role of allied health providers and Flexible Care Packages**

- AHPs, who are the core workforce for ATAPS, will play a critical role in the delivery of new Flexible Care Packages for people with Severe Mental Illness announced in the 2010-11 budget
- It is envisaged that the AHP role will include linking clinical care and community living support services

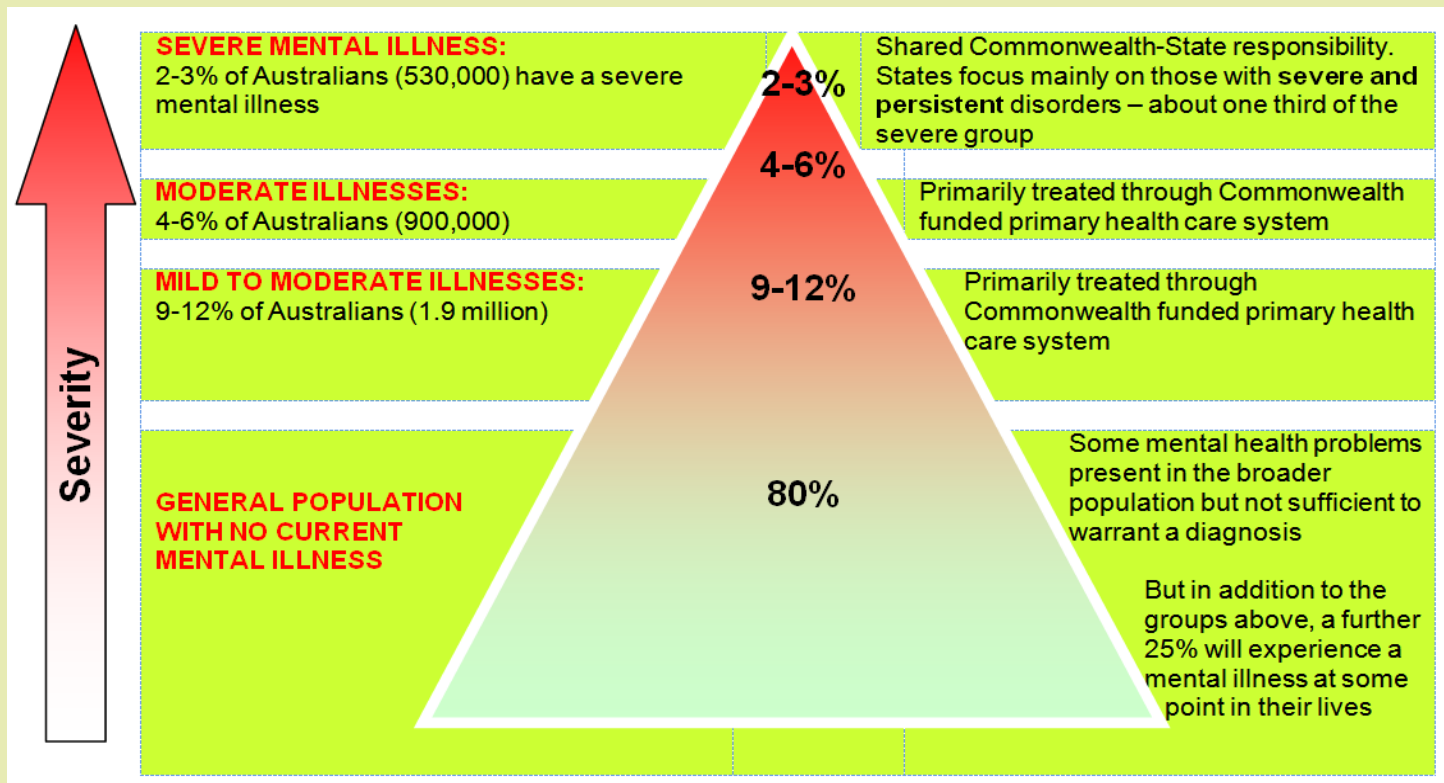


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## Where are people currently managed?





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## **What WON'T the flexible care packages do?**

The flexible packages will:

- NOT take over the care of people with severe and persistent mental illness currently being managed by the state specialist mental health system
- NOT try to fund all services – links to other existing programs will be put in place
- NOT exclude people on the basis of a particular diagnosis



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## ***headspace***

- *Headspace – the national youth mental health initiative*
- Youth friendly access for young people aged 12-25 years to ‘one stop shop’ services
- Targets early intervention to young people with common disorders and or drug/alcohol comorbidities
- Currently 30 service platforms and has evaluated as improving mental health outcomes for young people
- Expansion in recent budget announced up to further 30 local services and extra funding for existing sites (\$78m).
- Employs social workers and occupational therapists both through allied health funding stream, and in general services provided through core funding.



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## ***Headspace services***

Services that provided through headspace by AHWs include:

- Initial screening and assessment
- Referral to other services
- Psychological therapies and counselling
- Drug and alcohol counselling
- Coordination of care
- Group sessions to promote mental health literacy, awareness raising and peer support



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## ***headspace***

- Expansion of headspace services will also create further employment opportunities for OTs and social workers
- Funding has been quarantined for allied health service delivery as part of headspace services – about \$5m per year is allocated in this way currently
- Headspace is funded through single contract between Commonwealth and headspace company
- AHWs employed directly by the local headspace sites, not by the Commonwealth but in line with guidelines.