



## Right care, first time, where you live

**The University of Sydney's Brain and Mind Centre's 'Right care, first time, where you live' program is changing the way local communities invest in youth mental health and social care.**

### A 'game changer' for youth mental health

With less than one in five young people in Australia having access to high-quality or effective mental health intervention, the BHP Foundation has partnered with the University of Sydney's Brain and Mind Centre on a \$12.8 million 'game changer' for youth mental health.

The program addresses the problem faced by communities around the country: how to know what combination of programs and initiatives will work best, over what period of time, at what scale to deliver the best outcomes in getting young people back to school, back to work and thriving in their communities.

By harnessing the latest advances in systems modelling and simulation, the program is designed to guide national and local investments in sustained, coordinated and digitally enhanced youth mental health care.

The place-based approach advocated by the program will give local communities the evidence they need to allocate local resources and funding in a targeted way.

### Allocating resources and funding where it's needed most

In Australia, three in four major mental disorders have their onset before the age of 25 years, making young people most vulnerable to suicide and consequences of mental ill-health. The cost to the economy of mental ill-health and suicide is in the order of \$43-\$51 billion annually, a cost borne by families and communities across the country.

BHP Foundation's AU\$12.8 million partnership allows Brain and Mind Centre researchers, in partnership with the international not-for-profit Computer Simulation and Advanced Research Technologies (CSART) alliance, to work with local health agencies.

Together, they will develop interactive dynamic models that put national, data-driven evidence into a local context, empowering the people responsible for delivering mental health services to their communities on the ground to respond to the mental health needs of young people.

## Identifying tipping and turning points

A successful pilot program was run with Healthy North Coast, the provider of the North Coast Primary Health Network (PHN), a region with some of NSW's most challenging mental health problems. The pilot used dynamic systems modelling to identify the tipping and turning points in young people's mental health trajectories.

Over nine months, general practitioners, educators, representatives from emergency services and people with lived experience and other community groups, worked together to identify suicide risk factors. These were entered into a dynamic model to predict the impact of various combinations of interventions over time.



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Surprisingly, some interventions revealed an upswing in a predicted suicide curve when they were tested. Armed with this real-time data, the PHN worked with community and service providers to focus on social connectedness through a program that is now in place in six towns in the region.

In collaboration with local communities and their relevant health agencies, 'Right care, first time, where you live' is co-developing and embedding locally designed dynamic systems models in eight Primary Health Network regions across urban, regional and rural Australia.

These local models will become a blueprint, to be scaled up or down to support the mental health service needs of communities across the country.

*'This is a smart and very timely investment in large-scale and genuine system transformation to support the next generation of young Australians. It accepts that 'place-based' and inclusive implementation of expertise is essential to long-term success and sustainability.*

*'It is the type of brave investment in the future that is at the heart of genuine innovation and rapid progress on these key social and economic issues.*

*Supporting young people to access the right level of care, early in the course of illness, will save lives now and enable young people and their communities to thrive.'*

**Professor Ian Hickie,  
co-director  
Brain and Mind Centre**

## Driving transformational change

The scale of Australia's youth mental health challenge demands testing new approaches. The BHP Foundation believes strategic philanthropy can drive the transformational change required to better support the mental health of young people and reduce the tragedy of youth suicide.

This innovative project has the potential to make a real impact in Australia and globally and aligns with the Foundation's ambitions to give young people every chance to fulfil their potential.

The five-year program is funded through the Foundation's Australia Country Program which is focused on:

- supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organizations in their drive towards more effective governance and self-determination; and
- aiding the development of young people through initiatives related to early childhood, STEM education and mental health and well-being.

**For more information on the BHP Foundation visit [bhp.com/foundation](http://bhp.com/foundation).**