



February 2020

Quarterly Newsletter

Aged Care Mental Health Program

Richmond Fellowship Tasmania (RFT) has been awarded funding from Primary Health Tasmania (PHT) to provide mental health services to residential aged care facilities in Tasmania.

Delivered by RFTs Richmond Health Team, the Aged Care Resident Mental Health Program is for residents living in an aged care facility with a mild to moderate mental health concern. The program provides up to 10 free sessions at the residential facility either one to one, in a group or a mix. Referral is very easy as anyone can refer to us, we just ask that you discuss the referral with the resident and the facility manager or Clinical Nurse.

About Us

Richmond Fellowship Tasmania (RFT) has been providing support and services for people with mental illness for over 30 years. Our staff are trained in and committed to person centred care and recovery. We are a state-wide, not for profit, non-religious, ISO accredited organisation that works with people and their families to improve wellbeing.

Richmond Health is a part of RFT we provided clinical services to people experiencing mental illness in the Resident Aged Care Program and the Mental Health Nurse Program. We have mental health clinicians based in the South, North & North West of the state currently working in the aged care program.

The Richmond Health, Aged Care Resident Mental Health Program

Launch of the state-wide Aged Care Mental Health Program commenced 1st November 2019. In line with Primary Health Tasmania's request, Richmond Health has rolled out this program to three providers who have facilities in the North, North-West and South of Tasmania. Since commencement, the following Residential Aged Facilities are accessing the program.

One Care, Umina Park Burnie, The Manor Launceston, Bishop Davies Kingston, Barossa Park Glenorchy, Rubicon Grove Port Sorell.

Uniting AgeWell, Ningana Sorell, Strathdevon La Trobe, Strathaven Rosetta, Aldergate Launceston, Queensborough Rise Sandy Bay.

Southern Cross Care, Glenara Lakes Launceston, Sandown Apartments Sandy Bay, Yaraando Somerset, Mary's Grange Tarooma.

Since launching the program in November 2019, we have received 50 referrals, with 31 residents receiving mental health care. As part of the program, Richmond Health will



support residents with appropriate referrals into other programs and services, where it is deemed this program does not meet their needs. The program is not available to residents with advanced stages of Dementia or who are already receiving services from the Older Person Mental Health Team.

Program Roll Out and Access

Richmond Health in line with Primary Health Tasmania's contract provisions intends to expand access to program to all interested Residential Aged Care Facilities across Tasmania over the coming years.

We are currently continuing to expand the programs reach to all facilities operated by the three providers already engaged in the program. In addition to this, Richmond Health is now **inviting expressions of interest** from other Providers of Residential Aged Care Facilities across Tasmania to participate in the program.

To be considered for this opportunity, Residential Aged Care Facilities will need to.

- Express their interest to Lisa Toohey via lisat@rftas.org.au
- Engage and meet with the Richmond Health Team
- o To explain the program
- o To undertake an assessment of resident needs and facilities capability

CEO to Sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Richmond Health.

Our Team

Richmond Health has a team of experienced and professional mental health clinicians providing services across the State. Our team includes, psychologists, mental health nurses, mental health accredited social workers and social workers all with significant experience working within the mental health sector and supporting older persons.

How do I know if a resident has a mild to moderate mental health concern?

Our Psychologist Sarah has put together some examples of when to refer. Signs of mild-moderate mental health difficulties:

- Fear of falling
- Continual requests for help
- Feelings of sadness, emptiness, hopelessness, worthlessness, guilt tearfulness
- Recurrent thoughts of death, expressing a wish to die or that life is not worth living
- Suicidal thoughts
- Loss of interest or pleasure
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Irritability, negativity, persistent complaints
- Social withdrawal (e.g., refusal to participate or leave room)
- Life events that can precipitate mental health difficulties in residents:
 - Moving into residential care (especially if resident had little choice/control in the process)
 - Loss of a family member or friend (including close co-resident)



- Onset of cognitive impairment or dementia
- Progressing dementia in spouse/partner
- Change in health or functional status, sensory loss
- Living with chronic pain
- Terminal diagnosis
- Unresolved grief
- Conflict in family that is impacting on resident's wellbeing
- History of depression, anxiety or trauma

Mental Health Training for Staff

Steps Group Australia have been given funding by Primary Health Tasmania to develop a training program which will empower workers in residential aged care services to gain confidence and skills to assist older people with mental health concerns. This training will be rolling out across the state in the next few weeks. STEPS Education and Training is seeking expressions of interest from aged care providers who wish to be on an advisory group for the ongoing development of the mental health training program for aged care facilities. For more information, questions or to express interest please email warreny@stepsgroup.com.au. Our staff at Richmond Health will work closely with Steps Australia and form part of an advisory group.

Contact Us

Our state office is 76 Goulburn street, Hobart. Our phone number is 62283344. Find us on Facebook and see our website www.rft.org.au for further information.

