

# ATAPS Summary document

## 1. Introduction

The Access to Allied Psychological Services (ATAPS) program is funded by the Department of Health and Ageing for the purposes of providing a treatment avenue for those not able to afford and/or access other services. The patient eligibility, disorder types, referral processes and reporting requirements are designed to ensure the project complies with prevention and early intervention principles outlined by the Australian Government - Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA).

Access to Allied Psychological Services is a GP initiated referral service for South Eastern Sydney Division GPs, who have completed an induction with a South Eastern Sydney Division of General Practice (SESDGP) Practice Support Officer, and wish to refer their financially and or socially disadvantaged patients for free counselling sessions.

To refer to an ATAPS service provider, GPs must develop a GP Mental Health Treatment Plan and should only refer patients that are known to them (existing or ongoing relationship for at least the last six months), who are financially disadvantaged and not eligible for alternative referral pathways.

GPs are advised not to refer patients not known to them or who have been sent to them by a third party (e.g. allied mental health providers) for the sole purpose of a referral into our ATAPS service. Best practice in mental health shared care is provided in the context of GPs sharing their insight with a local allied mental health provider, about patients for whom they have comprehensive clinical knowledge. This approach provides the foundation for a trusted therapeutic alliance to develop between GP, patient and allied mental health professional and leads to better treatment outcomes for the patient.

*There are two funding tiers under ATAPS which SESDGP GPs can refer patients through:*

- *Tier 1 - Depression, Anxiety, Stress;*
- *Tier 2 - Women with Perinatal Depression and individuals who have attempted suicide or self harm or who are identified by a GP as being at high risk of suicide or self harm.*

### **Tier 1 Depression, Stress and Anxiety**

This referral service is for patients with a mild to moderate, non-acute diagnosable mental health disorder, who are financially and/or socially disadvantaged. Each referral by a GP entitles the patient to 6 free counselling sessions (with the option for a further 6 following a review by their GP) with an allied mental health provider who has been specifically recruited and contracted to our ATAPS Project. Referrals are capped at a maximum of 2 per financial year per individual i.e. 12 sessions with an allied mental health provider.

### **Tier 2 for Women with Perinatal Depression**

This service aims to improve prevention and early detection of antenatal and postnatal depression, and to provide better care, support and treatment for expectant and new mothers and their families experiencing depression. Referrals under this service entitles individuals to 6 counselling sessions (with the option for a further 6 following a review by their GP) with an allied mental health provider who has experience in treating Perinatal Depression. Referrals are capped at a maximum of 2 per financial year per individual i.e. 12 sessions with an allied mental health provider.

### **Tier 2 for people who have attempted self harm or who are identified by a GP as being at high risk of self harm**

This service has been developed to complement and operate in parallel with ATAPS Depression, Anxiety, Stress and the Better Access to Mental Health Care Initiative and other existing Commonwealth and State funded acute care and crisis support services. Patients who are undertaking, or at risk of undertaking non-suicidal self harming behaviours can be referred to this service and will receive priority access to specifically trained allied mental health providers. There is no limit to the number of sessions available to patients through this referral service; however it is anticipated that sessions would be conducted in a condensed time period (1-2 months).



## 2. Referral Options for Mental Health Services

---

The following options should be considered when referring patients with mental health conditions:

<b>Area Health</b>	Patients with chronic/severe mental health conditions who require intensive or crisis / acute care via referral to South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Mental Health Services or to private psychiatry or other specialist treatment services.
<b>Primary Care</b>	Patients with chronic and/or complex physical and associated psycho-social presentations for whom GPs can refer using Primary Care item numbers 721 and 723, providing access to Medicare rebated counselling (up to five) with Medicare registered psychologists for up to five sessions.
<b>Better Access</b>	Patients with a mental health disorder (as indicated under ICD-10 PHC classifications) for whom a GP must develop a GP Mental Health Care Plan (item number 2710) which triggers access to Medicare rebated counselling with Medicare registered psychologists, OTs or social workers for up to twelve sessions in a calendar year.
<b>ATAPS</b>	Patients with a mental health disorder (see ICD-10 PHC classifications) who are financially and or socially disadvantaged for whom eligible GPs must develop a GP Mental Health Treatment Plan (item number 2710) which triggers access to free counselling with one of our contracted ATAPS service providers for up to twelve sessions in a financial year

If you consider the ATAPS referral option you will need to review the following patient eligibility criteria, the types of disorders treated and adhere to the referral process.

## 3. Patients eligible for ATAPS

---

ATAPS funding is available to provide services for patients who meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Individual patients aged 12 years and older who are not eligible for immediate assistance from the Area Health Service's mental health services (i.e. those with non acute, non chronic mild to moderate mental health conditions)
  - Individual patients who are not be able to access services as a result of being financially and or socially disadvantaged which is defined as those who have a health care card (you must sight the health care card) or in receipt of a Centrelink pension or benefit
  - Patients who are part time or full time students in receipt of study allowances
  - Patients who live in public housing, supported accommodation, crisis shelters or boarding houses
  - Patients who are unwaged and do not have private health cover
  - Patients who don't meet eligibility requirements for other programs for mental health assistance or who are not able to access alternative referral pathways
- and**
- Patients whom the GP believes can commit to completing the entire GP Mental Health Care Treatment plan and review process with them and the eligible provider
  - Patients who require a short term focussed approach to an aspect of care

## ATAPS Clinical Services and Patient Eligibility

	<b>Tier 1 Depression, Anxiety and Stress</b>	<b>Tier 2 Perinatal Depression</b>	<b>Tier 2 Self Harm Prevention &amp; Early Intervention</b>
<b>Patient Eligibility</b>	Individual patients aged 12 years and older, socially and financially disadvantaged with non acute, non chronic mild to moderate mental health conditions.	Individual patients aged 12 years and older, socially and financially disadvantaged with antenatal or postnatal depression, (mother or family member) during pregnancy or within the first year following child birth.	Individual patients aged 12 years and older, socially and financially disadvantaged and undertaking or at risk of undertaking non-suicidal self harming behaviours.
<b>Sessional Services</b>	12 sessions per financial year. A GP must initiate a new referral for each set of 6 sessions.	12 sessions per financial year. A GP must initiate a new referral for each set of 6 sessions.	Unlimited sessions. Each GP referral entitles a patient to 12 sessions with an accredited service provider.
<b>Outcome Tool Used</b>	DASS 21.	Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS).	Modified Scale for Suicide Ideation (MSSI) – Only to be administered by the contracted ATAPS Self Harm providers.
<b>Referral Process</b>	GP contacts SESDGP to activate referral and obtain unique patient ID.	GP contacts SESDGP to activate referral and obtain unique patient ID.	GP contacts SESDGP to activate referral and obtain unique patient ID.
<b>Types of disorders treated</b>	Mild to moderate, non-acute, stress, anxiety, depression, alcohol/drug use disorders, phobic disorders, adjustment disorders, somatic complaints, eating disorders, sexual disorders, conduct disorders, bereavement disorders, panic disorder, dissociative disorder, sleep problems, hyperkinetic, neurasthenia, enuresis, mental disorder not otherwise specified.	Perinatal depression.	Non-suicidal self injury or self harming behaviours including self-mutilation and co-occurring self poisoning, reckless use of alcohol and/or other substances, high risk sexual behaviours and behaviours which may be considered as eating disorders.
<b>Waiting Times</b>	First appointment must take place within four (4) weeks of referral.	First appointment must take place within four (4) weeks of referral.	First contact is made within 24hours of referral with first appointment occurring within 72hrs of referral.
<b>Contact Person to Activate Referral</b>	SESDGP Administration team 9663 5958.	SESDGP Administration team 9663 5958.	SESDGP Administration team 9663 5958.
<b>Contact Person for Reporting and/or Referral Procedures</b>	Mikol Furneaux at SESDGP 9663 5958.	Mikol Furneaux at SESDGP 9663 5958.	Mikol Furneaux at SESDGP 9663 5958.

**NOTE:** *dementia, delirium, tobacco use disorder and mental disability are excluded from treatment under this service.*