

ATAPS Summary document

1. Introduction

This project 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 (ATAPS) 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, especially for Indigenous Australians and people from Culturally & Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.*
- *Tier 2 - Women with Perinatal Depression*
 - *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*
 - *Suicide Prevention Service*

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 calendar 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 calendar year per individual i.e. 12 sessions with an allied mental health provider.



Tier 2 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

This service aims to provide better care, support and treatment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. This funding is focused at Mental Health disorders where short term focused psychological services are clinically appropriate under the ATAPS Model. 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 calendar year per individual i.e. 12 sessions with an allied mental health provider.

Tier 2 Suicide Prevention Service

This Service provides priority access to ATAPS for people who have self harmed, attempted suicide or who have suicidal ideation and are being managed in the primary health care setting.

This service is not designed to support people who are at acute and immediate risk of suicide and self harm. Individuals at acute risk should be referred immediately to ESMHS acute mental health team.

The Suicide Prevention Service is primarily designed for 3 groups of people:

- People who, after a suicide attempt or self harm incident, have been discharged into the care of a GP from hospital, or released into the care of a GP from an Accident and Emergency Department;
- People who have presented to GP after an incident of self harm; and
- People who have expressed strong suicidal ideation

This service is not designed for people who are being managed on an ongoing basis by state government mental health services.

While many people who attempt suicide have a mental disorder, a person does NOT need to have had a mental disorder diagnosed before referral to the service, and is NOT required to have a GP Mental Health Treatment Plan completed.

2. Referral Options for Mental Health Services

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

Area Health	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.
Primary Care	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.
Better Access	Patients with a mental health disorder (as indicated under ICD-10 PHC classifications) for whom a GP must develop a GP Mental Health Treatment Plan (item number 2700/2701 or 2715/2717) which triggers access to Medicare rebated counselling with Medicare registered psychologists, OTs or social workers for up to ten sessions in a calendar year.
ATAPS	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 which triggers access to free counselling with one of our contracted ATAPS service providers for up to twelve sessions in a calendar 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 Treatment plan and review process with them and the eligible provider
- Patients who require a short term focussed approach to an aspect of care

Patient Eligibility – Session limits explained

Tier 1 and Tier 2

Through ATAPS, patients are eligible for a maximum of 12 sessions per calendar year - six time-limited sessions with an option for a further six sessions following a mental health review by the referring GP. Sessions can be individual and/or group therapy sessions. ATAPS provides patients with assistance for short-term intervention. If further sessions are required it may mean that the patient needs a longer term program to meet his/her needs.

In addition, the referring practitioner may consider that in exceptional circumstances the patient may require an additional six individual focussed psychological strategies above those already provided (up to a maximum total of 18 individual services per patient per calendar year). **Exceptional circumstances** are defined as a significant change in the patient's clinical condition or care circumstances which make it appropriate and necessary to increase the maximum number of services. It is up to the referring practitioner to determine that the patient meets these requirements. In these cases a new referral should be provided, and exceptional circumstances noted in that referral.

Tier 2 Suicide Prevention Service

Patients are entitled to as many sessions as clinically required within a 2 month period upon referral

ATAPS Clinical Services and Patient Eligibility

	Tier 1 Depression, Anxiety and Stress	Tier 2 Perinatal Depression	Tier 2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People	Tier 2 Suicide Prevention Service
Patient Eligibility	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	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People	Patients who present after an incident of self harm Patients who have expressed strong suicidal ideation to their GP
Sessional Services	12 sessions per calendar year. A GP must initiate a new referral for each set of 6 sessions	12 sessions per calendar year. A GP must initiate a new referral for each set of 6 sessions	12 sessions per calendar year. A GP must initiate a new referral for each set of 6 sessions	Sessions are for a 2 month period, as clinically required
Outcome Tool Used	DASS 2	Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)	Tools as used in Tier 1 & Tier 2 PD	The Modified Scale for Suicidal Ideation
Referral Process	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	GP contacts SESDGP to activate referral and obtain unique patient ID Provide Patient with the contact details of the ATAPS After-Hours Suicide Support Line 1800 859 585
Types of disorders treated	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	Disorders were short term focused psychological services are clinically appropriate under the ATAPS Model	Patients who are referred under this Tier: - entitled to services under Tier 1 and Tier 2, where they require clinical assistance to treat a disorder as highlighted under Tier 1 and/or Tier 2
Waiting Times	First appointment within four (4) weeks of referral	First appointment within four (4) weeks of referral	First appointment within four (4) weeks of referral	Contact with 24 hrs First appointment within 72 hours of referral
To Refer	SESDGP 9663 5958	SESDGP 9663 5958	SESDGP 9663 5958	SESDGP 9663 5958
Contact Reporting/ Referral Procedures	Susan McCann at SESDGP 9663 5958	Susan McCann at SESDGP 9663 5958	Susan McCann at SESDGP 9663 5958	Susan McCann at SESDGP 9663 5958

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

Version 3 January 2012