

LINDSAY IS EXPLORING INDIGENOUS-APPROPRIATE COMMUNITY SERVICE COURSES SO SHE CAN SUPPORT OTHERS

CPS

COMMONWEALTH PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Commonwealth Psychosocial Support (CPS) program assists people with severe and complex mental health concerns to build their capacity to manage day-to-day activities, strengthen their social skills and relationships, create employment and financial goals, and connect to support services. The Western Sydney Primary Health Network commissions community-based organisations to run the CPS program in Western Sydney.

Lindsay* is a 41-year-old Aboriginal woman who has a long history of trauma, depression, anxiety and personality disorders. Her only ways of coping with her trauma and mental health challenges were through alcohol and drug abuse by means of self-medicating. She was having difficulty managing her relationships and emotions.

Originally, Lindsay was reluctant to engage with a non-indigenous worker, however, over the years she has built trust and respect with her psychologist and made tremendous progress. She has stopped her drug and alcohol use and is using dialectical behaviour therapy techniques to manage her emotions and heightened distress in a healthy way. Her psychologist has helped her focus on her triggers and discover ways to better control her stress, mood and emotions. She is now in a meaningful, intimate relationship and has repaired relationships with her mum and brother with whom she was previously estranged due to her behaviour whilst she was alcohol and drug dependent.

Lindsay is now physically fit and attends workout classes and the gym up to five times per week. She has also focused on improving her diet to reduce her risk of developing diabetes which, unfortunately, is highly prevalent in her family.

Lindsay's CPS support worker shared, "*Lindsay is currently exploring indigenous-appropriate community service courses so she can support others. It's been a real turnaround for her. She makes this privileged job I do so rewarding.*"

For more information about how WentWest supports Western Sydney, visit www.wentwest.com.au.