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# HEAD TO HEALTH

## HEAD TO HEALTH HUB

Head to Health mental health hubs and referral line have been established to support those who need support with their mental health. The initiative is a collaboration between the Department of Health and all NSW and ACT Primary Health Networks.

When Hawa\* presented to a Head to Health hub in Western Sydney, she was dealing with symptoms of anxiety, including feelings of agitation, uncertainty, and stress about the future. She was also experiencing physical symptoms as a result.

Hawa described herself as a result-oriented person who liked to do everything properly,

and she was noticing her anxiety symptoms increasing when she could not achieve things as planned. In her personal life, Hawa had recently undergone two rounds of IVF, which had both been unsuccessful. Hawa was unsure if she could try again, as the whole process had been very draining and emotionally stressful.

Head to Health worked collaboratively with Hawa to develop a care model. This included developing her self-esteem, learning visual and muscular relaxation techniques, talking and letter writing to her younger self, rationalising her thoughts, and reflecting on ideas of forgiveness and acceptance.

Hawa shared that she has felt really connected during her sessions at the hub, and her regular attendance has left her feeling much better. She has noted changes in herself, such as her ability to communicate her needs to her partner, give herself permission to relax, and refrain from punishing herself for negative life

outcomes. She's noticed her physical pains and breathing problems improve as her anxiety has decreased.

The most remarkable change was noticed by staff when she arrived ten minutes late for a session and said, *'I did not punish myself for this and gave myself time to breathe in the middle of the journey. I told myself, "it is ok if I arrive late, the clinician will understand my situation"'*. This shows a shift towards self-compassion, as, at the beginning of her engagement, Hawa would start crying if she ever needed to change her appointment, even for a very serious reason.

For more information about how WentWest supports Western Sydney, visit [www.wentwest.com.au](http://www.wentwest.com.au).