

## PRIMARY MENTAL HEALTH CARE (PMHC) TEAM

The WentWest Primary Mental Health Care (PMHC) team support GPs, psychologists, Mental Health Teams, Inpatient Units, and school counsellors to triage and process mental health referrals from general practice.

Henry\* is in his mid-thirties and was referred by the Acute Care Team at the LHD to the WentWest Primary Mental Health Service via the Suicide Prevention Service pathway (SPS).

Henry had left his previous job because of workplace stress and a lack of confidence in his abilities. Despite recently starting a new job, Henry was still struggling to cope with the pressure of being the sole source of income to support his family. The home he shared with his wife, young son and mother, had a mortgage of over \$900,000 and interest rates were continuing to rise. At home, there were ongoing disputes between his wife and mother which was causing him additional stress.

Speaking with Henry, a mental health nurse identified his traits of perfectionism, including his tendency to critically self-evaluate and be overly concerned with other people's perceptions of him. Henry was managing severe symptoms of anxiety and depression, with poor self-esteem, a lack of engagement and concentration in basic activities, insomnia, and feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness. These negative thoughts had made Henry question the meaning of life, and suicidal ideation had led to attendance at a hospital emergency department (ED) three months previously.

Over the course of 12 sessions, Henry's mental health nurse helped coach him on topics such as suicide prevention, relaxation skills, mindfulness, anxiety management and antidepressant dosage. Henry worked hard to focus on building his self-esteem through motivational interviews and scheduling time to socialise, exercise and spend time with his family. Henry also brought his wife along to a session to discuss ways the family could reduce tensions at home.

At the end of the three months, Henry had limited suicidal ideation and was assessed

at low-risk of returning to ED. Henry has increased his confidence and ability to manage ongoing anxiety and stress. Henry's insightful nature and motivation to change have helped him maintain his job and grow his support networks as he has put in extra effort to engage in activities with his friends, family and church.

The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) is a simple measure of psychological distress where the higher the rating, the higher the level of distress. When Henry first started accessing support, his K10 score was rated 36 out of 50. After the SPS intervention, Henry's K10 had improved to 24.

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