

FACT SHEET

An easy guide to starting a network

If your local mental health care community could benefit from building stronger relationships, improving referral pathways, creating local professional development opportunities, sharing experiences and peer support - an MHPN network could be the answer.

What is an MHPN network?

Basically, a network consists of a group of clinicians who meet on a regular basis.

Network membership is voluntary and members often include; psychiatrists, GPs, psychologists, mental health nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, and any other practitioner involved in delivering primary mental health care.

Networks can choose to focus on mental health issues generally or on an area of specific interest.

Specific interest areas are wide-ranging, and can include examples such as perinatal mental health, diabetes and mental health, suicide prevention, eating disorders and many others.

Did you know . . .

A network can connect practitioners who are separated by distance using technology. Contact MHPN to learn more.

What happens at a network meeting?

Network meetings can take any form agreed by the group.

The group also decide on the content that will be covered at the meeting. A meeting

might include a presentation by a guest speaker or discussion of a case study.

The MHPN team can provide advice and a range of tools to help ensure network meetings continue to be relevant and useful.

What will MHPN do and what do I need to do to start a new network?

MHPN will provide support to help start your network. However, it is important you have a clear purpose for the network and an idea of whom you would like to invite to join.

Step through the simple process on the reverse to see how to turn your idea into a reality.

Want more information? Contact MHPN

Mental Health Professionals' Network

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Simple steps to turn the idea of a network into a reality

Step 1: Check if a network that meets your needs already exists.

Use MHPN's Mental Health Network Map at www.mhpn.org.au to see if any networks already operate in your local area.

Group already exists that meets your needs.

Contact MHPN on 1800 209 301, email networks@mhpn.org.au or use the Register function on the Mental Health Network Map to be invited to the group's next meeting.

Did you know...

You can still start a network if one already exists in your area, so long as the purpose of your group is sufficiently different.

No group exists.

Confirm your proposed network meets MHPN's requirements

This means it has a mental health focus and is working towards:

- > including members from at least three different professions (including a GP)
- > meeting at least four times a year.

Appoint a contact to liaise with MHPN

While groups don't necessarily have to have an official leader, either an individual or small group of people share the responsibility of coordinating the group.

This person or group will be the primary point of contact with MHPN. More about coordination is available in the **Overview of Coordination Fact Sheet**.

Contact MHPN to get started

MHPN's network establishment team will work with you to:

- > determine interest from practitioners in your area
- > assist plan network meetings (as required)
- > promote your first meeting
- > advise about arranging meeting venue and catering.

Contact MHPN

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