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| Mental Wellbeing Resources Guide |
| Last reviewed September 2023 |

DISCLAIMER:

The information provided within this directory is intended for information purposes only. The content of this directory is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. The services and resources listed in this directory are not exhaustive and were available at time of compilation. This publication contains links to external websites that Vision 2020 Australia has no direct control over. It is the responsibility of users to make own decisions about information contained on linked websites.

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# Introduction

The Mental Wellbeing Resources Guide compiles services and supports that are available to people with vision loss. This guide provides a list of resources for both crisis and voluntary support. Resources are categorised according to the evidence based Stepped Care Model to deliver mental health care programs. This approach is central to the Australian Department of Health and aligns with the mental health reform agenda.

The guide contains resources from organisations associated with eye care service delivery and low vision rehabilitation. Also included are options offered by mainstream mental health services. Although these are not specifically tailored for vision loss, they provide alternative avenues for support.

The guide indicates how the resources can be accessed in different formats such as online, in person or via the telephone. The intended audience: children/young adults, adults and carers, is also indicated.

This directory further supports the [Adult Referral Pathway for Blindness and Low Vision Services](https://www.vision2020australia.org.au/resources/adult-referral-pathway/) developed by Vision 2020 Australia.

# Stepped Care Model

The Stepped Care Model delivers person-centred care and targeted support with different intervention components to address varying levels of mental wellbeing needs.

The aim is for the most effective, yet least resource intensive support to be delivered first, “stepping” to more intense and specialist services as the level of need increases. The Stepped Care Model aims to offer a range of support options and clear pathways between care options as individuals’ needs change.

The Stepped Care Model consists of five levels of care with a definition of mental illness severity and associated care required for each level. This is summarised in the table below.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Level of Care** | **Level of severity most commonly associated with level of care** | **Description of support/ service** |
| Level 1:  Self-management | Mild mental illness | Patient information  Self- directed learning  Service designed to prevent onset of illness or further escalation |
| Level 2:  Low intensity treatment | Mild to moderate mental illness | Peer support  Counselling  Services designed to be accessed quickly, without formal referral |
| Level 3:  Moderate intensity  treatment | Moderate mental illness | GP central role  Psychological therapy  Interventions to be structured and frequent |
| Level 4:  High intensity treatment | Severe mental illness (persistent or episodic). Not a high level of risk or complexity | Multidisciplinary support  Central role psychiatrist  High intensity interventions |
| Level 5:  Acute and Specialist Community Mental Health Services | Severe and persistent mental illness with a high level of risk | Intensive team-based specialist assessment and intervention with range of mental health professionals |

*Source: Adapted from Figure 2 (p.10) and Figure 4 (p.17), PHN Primary Mental Health Care Flexible Funding Pool Programme Guidance 2019*

# **Mental Wellbeing Resources Guide**

## Level 1- Self Management

| Type/Category | Resource  Click on the heading to be taken to the relevant resource | Access Mode | Audience | Consumer Cost |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Patient Information | [**Head to Health Communication Materials**](https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/about/communication-materials)  Downloadable materials to promote mental health support | Online | Adults | N/A |
| Patient Information | [**Head to Health Fact Sheets**](https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/mental-health-difficulties/mental-health-conditions/anxiety-disorders) Information about anxiety, bipolar disorder, depression, trauma and stressor-related disorders | Online |  | N/A |
| Patient Information | [**Beyond Blue Anxiety Facts**](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/anxiety) | Online |  | N/A |
| Patient Information | [**Beyond Blue Depression Facts**](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/depression) | Online |  | N/A |
| Patient Information | [**Beyond Blue Wellbeing Information**](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/personal-best/pillar/wellbeing) Tips and strategies to maintain wellbeing. | Online |  | N/A |
| Patient Information | [**Beyond Blue Supporting Someone**](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/supporting-someone) Tips on how to support family or friend(s) with depressive symptoms | Online | Carers | N/A |
| Patient Information | [**Wellbeing Information, Macular Disease Foundation Australia**](https://www.mdfoundation.com.au/living-well/wellbeing/wellbeing-overview/) Webpage about mental health, including video content with tips to manage wellbeing | Online |  |  |
| Self-Guided Programs | [**Lifeline: Podcast Holding onto Hope**](https://www.lifeline.org.au/real-experiences/holding-on-to-hope-podcast/) Podcast series by Lifeline that provides listeners with personal lived experience to offer inspiration and support to others. The series was previously aired by Vision Australia Radio to help raise awareness on mental health and wellbeing. | Online | Adults | N/A |
| Self-Guided Programs | [**Mental Health Online: Depression Program**](https://www.mentalhealthonline.org.au/pages/a-guide-to-using-depression-online-with-clients) Free, 11-module, self-paced program. Based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Appropriate for anyone experiencing low mood. Learn strategies to improve mood | Online | Adults | N/A |
| Self-Guided Programs | [**Mental Health Online: Generalised Anxiety Disorder**](https://www.mentalhealthonline.org.au/pages/a-guide-to-using-the-generalised-anxiety-program-with-clients) Free, 12-module, self-paced program based on cognitive behavioural therapy. Appropriate for those experiencing anxiety and worry | Online | Adults | N/A |
| Self-Guided Programs | [**This Way Up: Digital mental health treatment**](https://thiswayup.org.au/) Range of self-paced online programs based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, that teach clinically-proven strategies to improve wellbeing. NFP joint initiative of St Vincent’s Hospital Sydney and University of NSW. | Online | Adults, Carers | ‘Wellbeing programs’ are free  ‘Treatment programs’ cost $59 for 90 days of access or are free if prescribed by a health professional who is registered with ‘This Way Up’ |
| Self-Guided Programs | [**MindSpot Assessment**](https://www.mindspot.org.au/assessment) Free and confidential with immediate results to learn more about symptoms and access clinically-proven treatment options | Online | Adults, Carers | N/A |

## Level 2- Low Intensity Services

| Type/Category | Resource  Click on the heading to be taken to the relevant resource | Access Mode | Audience | Consumer Cost |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Discussion Forums | [**Guide Dogs NSW Connection Services**](https://nsw.guidedogs.com.au/get-involved/connection-service/) Various programs for connecting with peers with similar experiences and stories | Online | Adults | N/A |
| Discussion Forums | [**Guide Dogs NSW Chatter Paws**](https://nsw.guidedogs.com.au/events/chatter-paws/) Group chat of 6 people led by client volunteers | Phone | Adults | N/A |
| Discussion Forums | [**Headspace Community Group Chat sessions**](https://headspace.org.au/online-and-phone-support/join-the-community/) 1 hour weekly online session led by mental health professional and member of the Youth National Reference Group | Online | Children/Young Adults, Carers | N/A |
| Discussion Forums | [**Sane Community Discussion Forums**](https://saneforums.org/) Available 24/7. Opportunity to connect with people to share experiences. Moderated by health professionals | Online | Adults, Carers | N/A |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Guide Dogs Victoria Catch Up Online Platform**](https://catchup.guidedogs.com.au/) Online social discussions, resources events calendar and news | Online | Adults | N/A |
| Peer Support Groups | [**‘Mac Mates’ Peer to Peer Program, Macular Disease Foundation Australia**](https://www.mdfoundation.com.au/support-me/support-programs/) Telephone support program with volunteer to share experiences. | Phone | Adults | N/A |
| Peer Support Groups | [**‘Eye Connect’ Community Support Programs, Macular Disease Foundation Australia**](https://www.mdfoundation.com.au/support-me/support-programs/)  Online or face-face group meetings for peopled with a lived experience of macular disease. | Online, In person | Adults | N/A |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Glaucoma Australia Facebook National Support Group**](https://glaucoma.org.au/i-have-glaucoma/your-support-network) Private group. Connect with other people with glaucoma. Moderated by orthoptist educator | Online | Adults | N/A |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Glaucoma Australia Congenital Support Group**](https://glaucoma.org.au/i-have-glaucoma/your-support-network) Private group. Connect with people who have glaucoma from a young age. | Online | Children/Young Adults, Adults | N/A |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Guide Dogs Victoria Young Adults Program**](https://vic.guidedogs.com.au/resources/about-our-services/peer-support/) Designed for young adults aged 18-35 to enhance independent mobility | In person | Children/Young Adults | Contact Guide Dogs Victoria |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Guide Dogs Victoria Connection Service: Community and Peer Groups**](https://vic.guidedogs.com.au/resources/about-our-services/peer-support/) Opportunities to meet other people with low vision and blindness since birth | Online, In person |  | N/A |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Guide Dogs NSW Young Adults Program**](https://nsw.guidedogs.com.au/get-involved/connection-service/) Social group to connect to others and share experiences. Occur every 2 months, Sydney CBD location. For ages 18-30. | In person | Adults | Contact Guide Dogs NSW |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Guide Dogs NSW Peer Support Program**](https://nsw.guidedogs.com.au/get-involved/connection-service/) Peer mentor with the aim to set a goal to discuss how to achieve. Delivered over 5 phone calls | Phone | Adults | N/A |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Guide Dogs QLD Support for Carers**](https://qld.guidedogs.com.au/get-support/support-for-adults/support-for-carers/) Dedicated instructors to support carers | In person, Phone | Carers | Contact Guide Dogs QLD |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Keratoconus Australia Support**](https://www.keratoconus.org.au/our-activities/ka-helpline/) Provides information, support and advice for keratoconus sufferers and their families | **Online, In person** | Children/Young Adults, Carers | N/A |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Retina Australia Peer Support Group**](https://www.retinaaustralia.com.au/getting-help/) Online private Facebook group. Multiple links to support groups dependent on location | Online, In person | Adults | N/A |
| Peer Support Groups | [**See D!fferently Peer Support**](https://www.seedifferently.org.au/peer-support/) Trained peer supporters are matched to clients and support is provided between 1 to 3 phone calls. | Phone | Adults, Carers | No cost for clients from the See D!fferently Low Vision Centre |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Vision Australia Community Groups**](https://www.visionaustralia.org/community/groups/community) Social support and outings to share interest in each state | Phone | Adults | Contact Vision Australia |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Vision Australia Quality Living Program**](https://www.visionaustralia.org/community/groups/quality-living-groups) Peer support either one on one or by joining a group. 8- week course, 2.5 hours per week. Includes group for young adults | In person, Phone | Children/Young Adults, Adults | Contact Vision Australia |
| Peer Support Groups | [**Vision Australia Telelink**](https://www.visionaustralia.org/community/groups/telelink) Virtual social program to discuss different topics such as current affairs | Online, Phone | Adults, Carers | Contact Vision Australia |
| Counselling | [**See D!fferently with RSB**](https://www.seedifferently.org.au/services/counselling/) Specially trained counsellors to provide awareness of functional and emotional impact of vision loss | Online, Phone | Children/Young Adults, Adults, Carers | Contact See D!fferently |
| Counselling | [**Guide Dogs QLD Counselling**](https://qld.guidedogs.com.au/get-support/feel-better-emotionally/counselling/) One on one counselling sessions | In person, Phone | Adults | Contact Guide Dogs QLD |
| Counselling | [**Beyond Blue Live Chat**](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/get-immediate-support)**- 1300 22 4636** Available 24/7. Short-term counselling, information, referral for depression and anxiety | Online, Phone | Adults, Carers | N/A |
| Counselling | [**Headspace one-on-one**](https://headspace.org.au/online-and-phone-support/connect-with-us/) Private chat with professional counsellor. Available 7 days a week, 9am-1am AEDT | Online, Phone | Adults | N/A |
| Counselling | [**Sane**](https://www.sane.org/get-support/drop-in-service) Support for people with complex mental health issues. Counsellors available 10am- 10pm AEST Mon-Fri | Online, Phone | Adults | N/A |
| Counselling | [**CanDo:4kids**](https://www.cando4kids.com.au/psychology/) Psychology service: Individual therapy, educational assessment, mental health assessment: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy Solutions Focused Therapy | Online, Phone | Children/Young Adults, Adults, Carers | Contact CanDo:4kids |
| Counselling | [**Kids Helpline**](https://kidshelpline.com.au/) **– 1800 55 1800** Counselling service for young people aged 5-25 years. Available 24/7 | Online, Phone | Children/Young Adults, Carers | N/A |
| Counselling | [**Victorian Aboriginal Health Services (VAHS) Family Counselling Service**](https://www.vahs.org.au/family-counselling-service/) Culturally safe emotional and mental wellbeing counselling. Four programs available: Adult social emotional wellbeing, Koori Kids, Financial Wellbeing, Ice Pilot Program | In person | Children/Young Adults, Adults, Carers | N/A |

## Level 3 - Moderate Intensity Services

| Type/Category | Resource  Click on the heading to be taken to the relevant resource | Access Mode | Audience | Consumer Cost |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Live Chat Crisis Counselling | [**Suicide Call Back Service**](https://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au/)**- 1300 659 467** Free service for people having suicidal thoughts, family or friends affected by suicide. Australia wide | Phone | Adults, Carers | N/A |
| Live Chat Crisis Counselling | [**Suicide Line Victoria**](https://suicideline.org.au/)**- 1300 651 251**  Free professional telephone counselling support 24/7 | Online, Phone | Adults, Carers | N/A |
| Psychological Therapy | [**Referral to GP**](https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/better-access-gp-mental-health-treatment-plan-template) Mental health assessment to determine needs and develop Mental Care Treatment Plan | Online, In person, Phone | Children/Young Adults, Adults, Carers | Cost of consultation with referring practitioner if applicable |
| Psychological Therapy | [**Mental Health Online: Therapy Assisted Program**](https://www.mentalhealthonline.org.au/pages/about-our-therapist-assisted-program) Free sessions with a therapist over 12-week support via weekly emails and up to 4 lives sessions via video to deliver a tailored program | Online | Adults | N/A |
| Psychological Therapy | [**VisAbility (WA)**](https://www.visability.com.au/services/therapies/therapies-psychology/)  Psychologists who support emotional wellbeing and mental health of people with vision impairment. Registered with Psychology Board of Australia. GP referral required | In person | Adults, Carers | Contact VisAbility |
| Psychological Therapy | [**Davinia Lefroy (WA)**](http://www.davinialefroy.com/) Clinical psychologist who is legally blind and has an interest in children to assist to manage disability and vision loss | Online, In person | Children/Young Adults, Carers | Accepts Mental Health Care Plan Referrals OR Contact Davinia Lefroy directly for alternative referral pathways and associated fees |
| Psychological Therapy | [**Dr Bonnie Sturrock (VIC)**](https://www.healthymind.com.au/) Clinical psychologist with an interest in people with low vision. Member of Australian Psychological Society. GP referral required | Online, In person | Adults | $270 for a 50-minute consultation.  Medicare Rebate is available |
| Psychological Therapy | [**MindSpot Teletherapy**](https://www.mindspot.org.au/course/teletherapy) Up to 4 free sessions with a therapist either weekly or fortnightly. | Phone | Adults | N/A |
| Psychological Therapy | [**Mood Assessment Program**](https://www.moodassessment.com.au/) Computerised software program for clinical assessment of depression. Referral required from healthcare practitioner | Online |  | Cost of consultation with referring practitioner if applicable |

## Level 4- High Intensity Services

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type/Category | Resource  Click on the heading to be taken to the relevant resource | Access Mode | Audience | Consumer Cost |
|  | [**Head to Health**](https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/) Australian Government initiative to establish community mental health services network. Skilled mental health professional connects to best service based on needs. No GP referral or appointment required. Free. Telehealth available | Online, In person, Phone | Adults, Carers | N/A |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type/Category | Resource  Click on the heading to be taken to the relevant resource | Access Mode | Audience | Consumer Cost |
| Acute Episode | **Urgent Care**  **IMMEDIATELY CALL 000** | Phone |  | N/A |
| Acute Episode | [**Acute Community Intervention Service (ACIS)**](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-services/acute-community-intervention-service) Provides urgent advice, referral and treatment to people with mental illness who are acutely ill or in crisis. Available 24/7 Can be requested by police, ambulance, public | Phone | Children/Young Adults, Adults, Carers | N/A |

## Level 5- Acute and Specialist Community Mental Health Services

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