



# 2018–19 Annual Report

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An Australian Government Initiative



## Chair's Message

On behalf of the Board of the South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN), I am pleased to introduce the 2018–19 Annual Report.

This year, we successfully commissioned 99.5% of our total funds into primary health services and increased our focus on youth mental health, alcohol and other drugs, suicide prevention, aged care and chronic disease management. This is testament to the hard work and commitment of the entire SEMPHN team, who strive to improve the health of the 1.5 million people in our catchment through the funding and design of more than 200 services.

As Primary Health Networks progress into their fifth year, the Board is excited about SEMPHN's future, as together, we continue to improve the health of our community by delivering quality primary healthcare.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graeme Samuel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a comma at the end.

**Graeme Samuel**  
SEMPHN Chair



## CEO's Message

SEMPHN has been challenging the way we deliver primary healthcare for four years. I'd like to recognise and extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone – clinicians, consumers, community members, providers, policy makers and our amazing SEMPHN team – as they continue to support us on our mission to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in our catchment.

A highlight for me was the launch of ResetLife in both Frankston and Port Phillip. We're the first organisation in Victoria to introduce this free, innovative outpatient program that helps people regain control over alcohol and substance use. This program takes a holistic and multi-disciplinary approach to relapse prevention and social connection. On the back of outstanding first-year results, we're excited to expand ResetLife to youth (12–25 years) in the coming months.

We were thrilled to welcome the Federal Minister for Health, The Hon Greg Hunt to launch BounceBack; a first-of-its kind program for our region that supports young people at risk of, or experiencing, severe and complex mental ill health.

We are seeing greatly improved outcome measures since the implementation of our Mental Health Stepped Care Model in 2017. We're now focusing on integrating services and systems with a goal of seamless referral and transition for clients. We can see that the ongoing commitment of our staff and stakeholders who continue to implement our mental health reforms is benefiting practitioners and the community.

As our community changes, so must our healthcare services. The impact of the baby boomer generation is being felt across the health system. Tackling mental ill-health in older Australians is possibly one of our biggest challenges. In light of this, we're proud to be rolling out mental health services in aged care facilities.

Substance use disorders and mental illness are not the only chronic disease areas that SEMPHN's programs target. We are working with 34 general practices through a range of chronic disease programs. We've invested almost \$10 million in supporting general practices to enhance the care co-ordination and work on quality improvement activities.

There is lots more to do and we are excited about the possibilities ahead. Once again, thanks to everyone for your contributions now and into the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ED', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

**Elizabeth Deveny**  
Chief Executive Officer



## Key Achievements

- 1,000 women attended mobile breast screening
- 1,500 free flu and pertussis (whooping cough) vaccines were given to vulnerable people
- Greater Dandenong achieved herd immunity (95.77%) for 12–15-month-old children
- One of our After-Hours programs saved almost \$5.5 million by reducing 10,011 potentially preventable hospitalisations – a return on investment of 353%
- Another After-Hours program saved \$6.2 million by preventing 12,000 emergency department presentations – a return on investment of 379%
- We funded 60 health professionals to receive RACGP-accredited Cultural Safety Training
- 50 SEMPHN staff were trained in Mental Health First Aid

Top: Samantha Michelson, headspace staff (right) and Lucy, headspace Early Psychosis program client, (left)

## Mental Health

One in four people across our catchment experience mental health issues. This year, our mental health programs resulted in 45,000 occasions of care. With all our services designed and delivered within our Stepped Care Model, there's more flexibility than ever for people who need it.

A few of our services:

- Our **Connect** pilot program in Greater Dandenong is led by a multi-lingual team and continues to provide free peer-led support for people experiencing significant stress, anxiety, grief or sadness – either in person, by phone, or online.
- Across our five **headspace** centres, more than 7,000 young people – most of those who had never accessed help – received support. headspace works as a one-stop-shop to help meet the needs of young people aged 12–25, their carers and their families – be it with mental health, physical (including sexual) health, alcohol and other drug services, and work and study support.
- The **headspace Early Psychosis program** offers intensive and specialist support to young people aged 12–25 who are experiencing psychosis, or who are at risk of developing psychosis. Treatment is focused on early intervention to minimise disruption in a young person's life and lessen the duration of untreated psychosis.
- **BounceBack** is an important addition to our Stepped Care Model and has helped more than 200 young people. This service provides case management, care coordination and psychological therapy to young people aged 12–25 with severe and complex mental ill health, and their families.
- With the roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and cessation of Partners in Recovery (PIR), SEMPHN commissioned **Psychosocial Support Services** (PSS) to help meet the needs of people with severe mental illness who may not be eligible for the NDIS.

## Suicide Prevention

We're working with the Victorian Government in Greater Dandenong and Frankston-Mornington Peninsula to improve individual and community resilience and reduce the rates of suicide and suicide attempts.

We are acutely aware that approximately 75% of those who died by suicide in Frankston-Mornington Peninsula between 2008–2017 were male. SEMPHN has funded Hope Assistance Local Tradies (HALT) to run a series of events and workplace visits for men where they hear about risk factors for suicide and pathways for support for themselves and their mates.

SEMPHN also commissioned The Way Back at Casey Hospital, in partnership with beyondblue, to provide non-clinical care and practical support for people for up to three months following a suicide attempt. We know that around 15–25% of people who attempt suicide will try again in the three months following discharge from hospital. The Way Back aims to change this situation.

## Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Regional Plan

The Regional Plan brings together SEMPHN, Alfred Health, Monash Health and Peninsula Health, to improve the health of people with mental illness or at risk of suicide.

Drawing on the experiences of consumers, carers and service providers, the Regional Plan will identify how mental health and suicide prevention service planning, integration and delivery can be enhanced to better support our community.

A Foundation Plan analysis will be complete by 30 June 2020. A Comprehensive Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention plan will be completed by 30 June 2022.

## Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD)

We fund innovative and data driven AOD services in the community to reduce the harm caused by risky AOD use. This includes early intervention, counselling, case management, care planning and co-ordination, post treatment support and withdrawal management.

In the context of AOD reform across Australia, we hosted several forums and community information nights to inform our commissioning strategy. Improved patient and clinical outcomes are a key focus. We continue to work collaboratively with the State Government to reduce service duplication and enhance our response to community needs, and further opportunities for alignment are being pursued.

### ResetLife

As part of the Australian Government's National Ice Action Strategy and funding, we commissioned and launched ResetLife in Port Phillip and Frankston. The first program of its kind in Victoria, ResetLife is an intensive outpatient AOD treatment program based on the Matrix Treatment Model and offered free to people in South Eastern Melbourne. It involves 16 weeks of intensive structured treatment, including individual and group sessions for clients and family members, followed by 36 weeks of continuing care. It is an alternative to residential rehabilitation for many clients, who are seeing excellent results.

### SafeScript

In preparation for the roll-out of the mandatory Real Time Prescription Monitoring system, SafeScript, SEMPHN hosted six training sessions across the catchment, attended by 217 GPs and 153 pharmacists. SafeScript is a clinical support system that allows doctors and pharmacists to access a patient's up-to-the-minute medicines supply history at the point of consultation. Seven additional educational sessions about SafeScript were delivered by the A4PN, and the roll-out of SafeScript was supported by an extensive communications campaign and online training hub.

## Area 4 Pharmacotherapy Network

The Area 4 Pharmacotherapy Network is a state-funded initiative led by SEMPHN, working in partnership with Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network. The Network's core work is to increase the number of pharmacotherapy prescribers (GPs and nurse practitioners) and dispensing pharmacies across our catchment, so that there's better access for patients who need opioid replacement therapy. This year, 670 visits were made to General Practices and pharmacies, leading to 39 new accredited community Medication Assisted Treatment for Opioid Dependence (MATOD) prescribers, and nine new approved MATOD pharmacies.

## Digital Health

Through our initiatives, including the POLAR data analysis tool and Nellie, SEMPHN is making the best possible use of technology to deliver better outcomes for patients and a better experience of care for clinicians. Nellie is a text-based persona that promotes patient self-care and is offered at no cost to providers in the SEMPHN catchment. She's the 'nurse in a pocket' helping patients make little changes, for big results.

We also provide core digital health and IT support free of charge including the Health Vital IT online resource which is improving the use of technology in healthcare, regardless of skill level. These programs are helping to reduce avoidable hospitalisations and make better use of health data.





Gabrielle McCann, Chronic Disease Management Nurse (left) and Dorothy, patient (right)

## Chronic Disease Management

Around one in four people across our catchment have a chronic disease. In one of SEMPHN's largest funding offerings to date, 28 general practices across the catchment received a total of \$6.5 million to deliver care co-ordination for patients with a chronic condition. More than 2,000 people in our community will benefit from this program.

## Aged Care

Supporting the mental health of older people is one of our greatest health challenges. Loneliness and social isolation are strongly associated with a range of physical and mental health conditions. More than half of Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) residents experience depression, compared to 10–15% of same-age adults who live in the community. SEMPHN launched a pilot program in Mornington Peninsula to deliver psychological services for older people in RACFs with mental ill-health, and the program will roll out across the catchment next year.

## Doctors in Secondary Schools

This Victorian Government trial provides on-site health care to secondary school students. Assisting young people to identify and address any health issues or concerns early, the initiative is reducing the pressure on working parents and community-based GPs. Doctors in Secondary Schools is in 18 secondary schools in Melbourne's south east and has served 2,038 young people. Many of the General Practices involved have offered additional hours at the school and made links to affordable allied health and psychology services via their clinics.



Liesl, Leadership student (right) and Clorinda Siemienowicz, Health and Wellbeing Coordinator (left), Rosebud Secondary College

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Culturally safe, person, family and community-centred care lies at the heart of holistic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care. SEMPHN continues to commission services to enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's access to high quality and culturally appropriate care. Local services include care co-ordination, mental health treatment, alcohol and drug treatment and suicide prevention services. Our provider support team worked with 100 general practices across the catchment to help provide comprehensive health care for Aboriginal people.



Liz Perrin, Access & Referral Lead, SEMPHN

## Access & Referral

As part of our Stepped Care Model, Access & Referral provides a single point of access (via fax and phone) for consumers, GPs and other health providers to make enquiries and referrals for mental health and AOD services in our region.

This year, the team received an average of 1040 calls per month and 7,000 referrals. Staff have a broad knowledge of local community services and can link people with non-SEMPHN funded services. Strong communication between the consumer, their health care professional/s and their supports mean that consumers can be helped to 'step up' or 'step down' the intensity of their care, as their needs change.

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