

STEP UP/ STEP DOWN



A proposed new residential service that seeks to support people recovering from mental illness in QLD.

A collaborative initiative led by BHC Creating Liveable Communities in partnership with.....



Metro North Hospital
and Health Service



communify



Partners in Recovery is an initiative of the Australian Government.

INTRODUCING STEP UP/STEP DOWN

The Step Up/Step Down service is a proposed new residential service to support people recovering from mental illness in the Brisbane Metropolitan North Region. It aims to support people's recovery by:

- Providing a safe, therapeutic environment into which they can "step down" after a stay in hospital, before returning home.
- Providing a place to "step up" if their health is deteriorating, as a way of avoiding the need to go to hospital.

The concept for this service has been developed by BHC Creating Liveable Communities in partnership with Metro North Mental Health, Open Minds, Community and Footprints, using an Innovation Fund Grant from Partners in Recovery. The Step Up/Step Down project developed a number of resources including a needs analysis, a draft operating model, architectural drawings, a development application for an identified site as well as documents for the sector such as design guidelines and governance options. Whilst the collaborating partners are keen to see a facility constructed and operating, the final decisions of where, when and how will rest with the Metro North Health and Hospital Service

WHY STEP-UP/STEP-DOWN?

There is a high level of need for mental health services in the Metro North Brisbane region. Hospital admissions for mental health conditions in Metro North exceed admissions for mental health conditions for the greater Brisbane region and all other capital cities in Australia. Between 12% and 24% of patients discharged from an acute inpatient mental health unit are readmitted within 28 days and services are struggling to meet targets for follow-up and community care.

This need is expected to grow between now and 2026 on the back of an expected 26% growth in the overall population of the region.

This level of demand means that new services are required now, and expansion will need to continue over the next decade to meet growing need.

A service specifically designed to support people immediately after discharge can take pressure off the health system in a number of ways. It can provide a safe, supported environment to which people can be discharged from hospital, saving them from having to stay longer than they need and reducing pressure on beds. It can provide a more gradual and better planned return to the community, increasing the chances of successful recovery and reducing the risk of readmission. If the service can also provide an early intervention option which prevents people from needing to be readmitted, this can further reduce pressure on hospital beds.

Such services are already operating successfully in Victoria, NSW and the ACT. They are small scale, short-term residential services with an average length of stay often as low as 1-2 weeks, staffed by a mix of clinical and non-clinical professionals. There is a high level of demand for all of these services, with occupancy levels of the existing services varying from 70 to 95%.

While such services are not a direct replacement for acute inpatient treatment, they can be delivered at much lower cost than such treatment and hence provide a cost-effective alternative for people who require some level of support but not the full hospital environment.



24%

“Up to 24% of patients discharged from an acute inpatient mental health unit are readmitted within 28 days. The greatest risk period for readmission is in the month following discharge.”

WHAT THE CONSUMERS SAID

Consumers and carers consulted for this project affirmed that there was a high level of need for the service and they thought a single service in Metro North would fill up rapidly. They were particularly attracted by the idea of a home-like, non-clinical service in which they could regain the skills and confidence they often lose in the course of a severe mental illness.

They shared a strong view that the service should be oriented towards recovery, allowing for maximum independence and charting a course for this independence from the first day of entry through individualised case planning.

They stressed that the service would not meet everyone's needs and there is a need for a variety of different services, but they were clear that the Step Up/Step Down service would fill an important gap and provide a service which is not currently available to people recovering from mental illness.





BUILDING THE FACILITY

A key part of establishing a Step Up/Step Down facility is building the physical space in which it is to be housed. BHC and KO&CoArchitecture have prepared a detailed design and planning work which included the development of a set of design specifications for the facility and testing these out by carrying out preliminary design and planning work based on an identified site on Brisbane's northside. The facility will be as homelike as it possibly can be – it should more closely resemble a home than a hospital.

By preference the facility would be located in a low-medium or medium density residential precinct rather than a commercial or special uses area.

Each resident will have their own private space in the form of a small (approximately 25m²), self-contained studio apartment with own private outdoor space such as a balcony. However, much of the daily activity in the service would take place in the common areas. These include a common kitchen and dining area, a shared lounge/sitting area, meeting and activity spaces, outdoor spaces and a communal laundry and drying area.

The facility would include sufficient office space for the proposed staff group, combined with a reception area located at the main entrance to the facility. It also includes a separate accommodation room for a staff member to sleep over.

EVALUATION

An evaluation plan has been commissioned to measure the impact of the Step Up/Step Down facility once it is operating. The design of the evaluation plan incorporates three focus areas: Process Evaluation (e.g. Occupancy rates, perceived care quality, use of outreach service); Impact Evaluation (e.g. recovery benefits both during stay and following exit) and Outcome Evaluation (e.g. impact on hospital admission frequency, length of stay, readmission and impact on other health service providers).

WHAT NEXT

The level of need in the Metro North Health District suggests that ultimately at least three Step Up/Step Down services will be required. Metro North Hospital and Health Service has committed to start the development of the first of these in the 2015-16 financial year, with further services to be considered at a later date.

MNHHS has identified a site within its property portfolio which will be suitable for this initial facility and will utilise the application for Development Approval prepared by BHC through the funded project. It is envisioned that management of the service will be outsourced to an appropriate NGO via a tender process once the development and building timetable is clear.

“Creating a home-like environment is a fundamental part of the design. If the building is designed like a health facility, then no amount of decoration will create the right atmosphere.”

Project Architect, Karen Ognibene,
KO&CoARCHITECTURE





WHAT IS THE SERVICE?

The service aims to improve mental health outcomes for consumers and prevent avoidable admissions to acute inpatient care. It aims to do this by:

- Providing an additional service option to meet the needs of people experiencing mental illness
- Providing a mix of clinical, psychosocial and other supports to assist recovery
- Supplementing and working with acute and community-based support services.

The facility will be set up to cater for approximately 10 clients at any one time. These would be adults (18 and over) with a diagnosed mental illness who would be likely to benefit from the service. Participation would be completely voluntary and consumers of Metro North Mental Health could be referred to the service from hospital or directly from home.

It is anticipated the facility will be staffed by a team which includes clinical and non-clinical staff, with the clinical staff employed by Metro North Mental Health and the non-clinical staff employed by the NGO that manages the facility. Altogether it is expected there would be a staff complement of approximately 12 people providing a 24/7 service.

Admission to the facility will involve a process of care planning, in which each client will work with the care team to develop a detailed care plan. This planning will guide the treatment and support process from day to day, and the client and staff will make appropriate adjustments as treatment proceeds.

The facility will have clearly documented discharge protocols and will be working towards discharge from the client's entry. It is intended that discharge will be carefully planned and include follow-up arrangements after discharge to maximise the chances of success and minimise relapse and readmission.

HOW WOULD IT BE RUN?

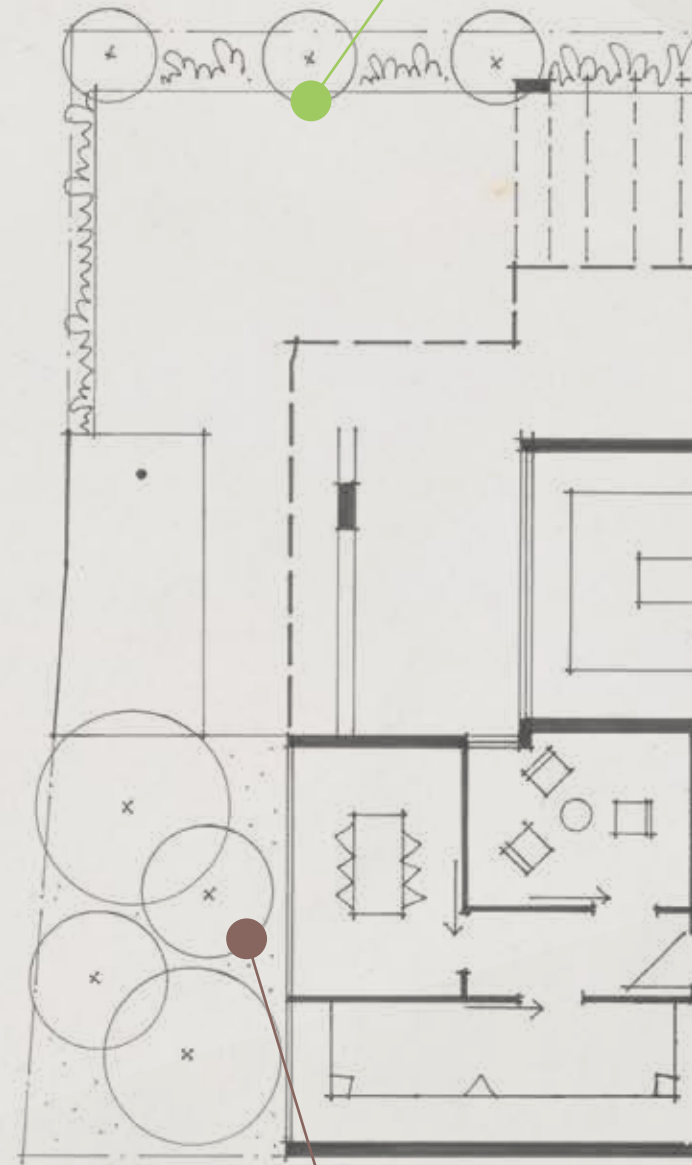
It is recommended that the facility be managed and operated on a collaborative basis between Metro North Mental Health and an NGO. The following describes likely key elements of this management and governance arrangement.

Funding of the service will be by Queensland Health. The funding will likely be divided into two components:

- One will be used directly by MNMH to employ the clinical staff who will work in the facility.
- The second will be used to fund the NGO who will be responsible for the overall management of the facility. This component will be let via a formal competitive tender process as per State Government purchasing policy.

At this stage the detailed final budget has not been developed. However, in 2014 the total annual operating cost for comparable interstate facilities was between \$1.2m and \$1.4m.

In keeping with the collaborative partnership approach, key management decisions are expected to be made by the collaborating partners through formal collaborative processes, while clinical and non-clinical staff at the facility will work in a collegial, non-hierarchical way which values the expertise and input of the various professions as well as that of consumers.





Soothing landscape buffer to site perimeter



Communal living, dining and kitchen space for resident interaction



Communal outdoor seating area connected to garden



Self contained studio apartment with high ceilings, natural light and natural ventilation

Communal garden as area for passive relaxation and reflection

Main building entry located amongst lush landscaping

CONTACT US

The Step Up/Step Down Project would like to thank and acknowledge all of the consumers, carers, consultants and contributing organisations and staff who provided input and feedback. These collaborations have been invaluable in shaping this project.

As Step Up/Step Down comes to a close in its current state; we look forward to seeing this facility become a successful and supportive part of the Brisbane community.

A special thank-you to the collaborative efforts of:

Partners in Recovery, Brisbane North PHN

BHC – Creating Liveable Communities

Open Minds – Individual Community Support, People Centred

Community – Together We Can

Foot Prints – Positive Steps with You

Metro North Health and Hospital Service

If you would like further information about this project you can find this on the Partners in Recovery website

www.northbrisbane.pirinitiative.com.au/innovation-fund/

or you may contact one of the collaborating organisations:

Brisbane North PHN

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Metro North Hospital and Health Service

Metro North Mental Health

www.health.qld.gov.au/metronorth/mental-health/

BHC Creating Liveable Communities

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This project has been made possible through a grant from North Brisbane Partners in Recovery, which is an initiative of the Australian Government.



PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

- ✓ Needs analysis, including a study of existing similar facilities
- ✓ Application for Development Approval for an identified block of land in north Brisbane
- ✓ Indicative architectural drawings and artists impressions for single level, two storey and three storey options
- ✓ Draft Operating Model
- ✓ Design Guidelines reflecting best practice design principles for delivery of a Step Up/Step Down facility
- ✓ Report on Consumer and Carer Consultation
- ✓ Evaluation Plan incorporating process, impact and outcome evaluation for use when Step Up/Step Down is operational
- ✓ Options Paper relating to Governance
- ✓ Draft Guiding Principles highlighting the intent of collaboration and respect
- ✓ Step Up/Step Down Seminar, incorporating individual video blogs and recording of the speakers