



MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION'S AGENCY COMMISSIONING PLAN AND COMMISSIONING SCHEDULE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Mental Health Commission's Agency Commissioning Plan?

The Agency Commissioning Plan (ACP) 2022-2027 details the Mental Health Commission's high level strategic approach to the commissioning of mental health and AOD services. Underpinned by key principles for commissioning, the ACP outlines six commissioning intentions and the proposed areas of focus for the next two and five year period.

The two year focus areas will be implemented within existing resources and allocated budgets. Where additional funding is required, this will be subject to standard government budget processes. Future focus areas for the Mental Health Commission are outlined within the five year period. These focus areas may be adapted and refined to accommodate emerging community needs and government priorities.

What is the Mental Health Commission's Commissioning Schedule?

Within the ACP is the Mental Health Commission's Commissioning Schedule (the Schedule). The Schedule aligns mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services into program areas against the four streams of Community Treatment, Community Bed Based, Community Support and Prevention from the Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Services Plan 2015-2025 (the Plan). The Schedule only includes service agreements, it excludes grants and memorandums of understanding (MOUs).

The Schedule provides a transparent overview of the Mental Health Commission's commissioning timeframes and enables service providers to forward plan for the commissioning of their respective program area services, or other services.

For existing services, the Schedule shows the period in which each program area will undergo a review. The program review period allows for a minimum of 18 months for the Commission to undertake consultation to inform the future service model for the program area as a whole, ensuring services remain consistent and appropriate. Within the minimum 18-month review period is the Mental Health Commission's unique 9-month notice period (to contracted non-government providers) of its intent regarding the procurement method to be undertaken for each service or program area.

The Schedule also identifies the timeframes in which new services will be established, and will involve consultation, co-design, and procurement. New services will be incorporated with an existing program area once established.

The Schedule also includes the annual review cycle for Commission Service Agreements with Health Service Providers.

Why has it been introduced?

The Mental Health Commission is working to make things clearer for stakeholders by setting out when commissioning will occur for different program areas.

The Schedule aligns the Commission's commissioning of mental health and AOD services to program areas, against the Plan service streams.

Currently, service contracts may contain a number of schedules for services in different program areas. The alignment of existing program areas to the Plan allows the Commission to plan and procure services by program area in a flexible manner, and to be responsive to the changing needs of the community.

The Schedule will provide greater clarity to service providers, as well as other commissioning agencies including other State Government departments and the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA), who also fund community services. This will, in turn, promote better coordination and targeting of resources in mental health and AOD services.

How does the Schedule affect me?

Your organisation may be requested to extend program areas in your agreement to the dates outlined in the Schedule. This will enable a staggered commissioning process, reducing administrative burden for the service provider. Normal contract management processes will continue to apply including reporting requirements, compliance and service agreement reviews and evaluations.

When will my organisation be notified if my service will undergo a Preferred Service Provider process or be part of an open tender process?

The Commission will continue to provide a minimum nine months' notice of its decision regarding the procurement method to be undertaken for each service or program area.

Does the Schedule mean that all services will now be publicly tendered out?

No. The commissioning strategy for each service program area will be dependent on several factors including:

- the type of service being purchased;
- evaluation and consultation results regarding the type of services;
- research findings including the size of the market, maturity of the market, location of service, etc; and
- length of time since last tender process.

The Mental Health Commission is committed to working with NGOs and the community services sector to deliver quality sustainable mental health and AOD services that keep people well and prevents or reduces mental health, alcohol and other drug problems. Sector input will also be sought as part of the deliberation on the procurement strategy to be applied for the respective program area.

Will the Agency Commissioning Plan and Schedule be reviewed and updated?

It is recognised that the Commission's commissioning intentions may adapt in response to government priorities, reviews and changes to community need. To accommodate this, the Agency Commissioning Plan and Schedule will remain living documents that will be updated periodically to adapt and refine future commissioning focus areas. As changes are made they will be communicated to the mental health and AOD sector and other relevant stakeholders.