



Government of **Western Australia**  
**Mental Health Commission**

## **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 2023-2030 (ACP) details the Mental Health Commission's high level strategic approach to commissioning mental health and AOD services. The ACP is underpinned by key principles for commissioning, it outlines six commissioning intentions and the proposed areas of focus over the next two and five year periods.

The two year and five 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. These focus areas may be adapted and refined to accommodate emerging community needs and government priorities.

Future focus areas will be informed by the Mental Health and AOD Strategy to be released December 2024.

### **What is the Mental Health Commission's Commissioning Schedule?**

The Mental Health Commission's Commissioning 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 details the mental health and AOD programs with existing budgets.

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 evaluation period allows for a minimum of 18 months for the Commission to undertake evaluation and consultation to inform future service models, ensuring services remain consistent and appropriate.

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

### **Why has it been introduced?**

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

Currently, service contracts may contain a number of schedules for services in different program areas. Alignment of existing program areas with the Plan allows planning and commissioning of services by program area in a flexible manner, and in response 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 commission community services. This in turn, promotes 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 service providers. 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
- the service provider market; 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 prevent or reduce mental health, alcohol and other drug problems.

### **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.