



Mentally Healthy City Townsville™

*To inform and empower individuals and communities
to achieve their best mental health and well-being.*

What is Mentally Healthy City Townsville™?

The Mentally Healthy City Townsville™ (MHCT) project is assisting the people of Townsville to flourish and thrive as a community by heightening the focus on mental wellness and through assisting individuals and organisations to better support people when they experience poor mental health. MHCT is improving the coordination and networking of existing service providers, whilst also strengthening the ability and resources of self-care and prevention of manageable mental health difficulties that occur in day-to-day life. Townsville has many great services available, however it is not enough to focus just on intervention without informed prevention.



How is it different?

MHCT is supporting the journey from a **grassroots level** by educating and empowering the local community to understand and maintain positive mental health.

MHCT project is **not replacing services already provided**, but working alongside mental health service providers and other organisations to provide the resources of engagement, education and promotion in our everyday lives.

MHCT is **building greater awareness** of the continuum of mental health and an integrated approach to provision of services and support.

Whilst the Townsville project is a **first formal approach for an Australian city**, this concept has been successful globally in cities like Philadelphia (USA) and London (UK) amongst others.



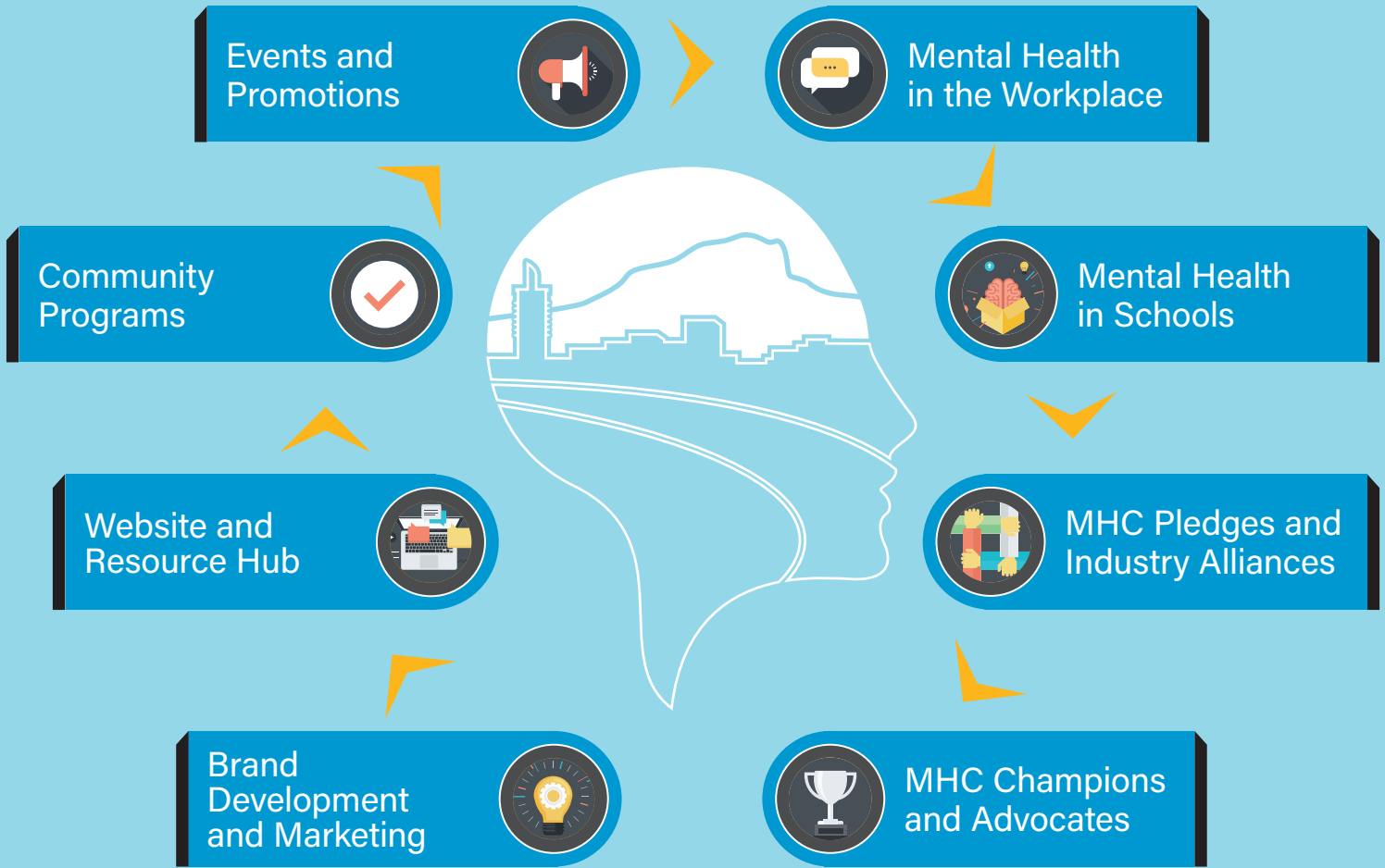
- Mental health is a significant public health issue throughout Australia as it is in many other countries
- The current approach is not sufficient to address mental health concerns in Australia and bring real and lasting change to the lives of Australians who experience poor mental health and more distressingly take their own lives
- Collaborative action for community well-being is a necessary step in improving the mental health of our community
- Townsville has a suicide rate 2.5 times the national average (Buckby, Stodden, and Lutkin, 2016)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have a rate 3 times the national average (Buckby et al., 2016)
- The MHCT assists in building individual and community resilience and capacity to respond to mental health issues and self-care, reduce stigma and build social cohesion
- A thriving community will likely deliver a range of benefits beyond the positive health outcomes - economic, cultural, educational and sporting.

Why Townsville?

Townsville, like other similar locations across Australia has a rising mental health issue within the community. The people of Townsville to date have been vocal about the importance of supporting their fellow residents from a range of different cultures and backgrounds. Townsville has a strong community ethic based on sporting and cultural investment by the population and takes pride in coming together to face challenges head on. This is a group who can lead the way for social and cultural change and improve the understanding and importance of positive mental health and reduce the stigma that surrounds.



Elements of the Mentally Healthy City project



Brand Development and Marketing

Brand Development and Marketing of MHCT is crucial, and throughout Phase 1 the brand has been established within the Townsville community as a reputable, and relatable brand. The ongoing success of MHCT requires this momentum to continue and increase the rate of advertising to a larger variety of mediums. Due to the expanding presence of MHCT currently and to future proof quality control of the brand, it is highly recommended that MHC is trademarked.



Website and Resource Hub

The MHCT Website is the central repository for all information around the project, in addition to databases containing well-being related organisations and mental health service providers. The website will continue to be updated throughout the life of the project with new functionality and features. The Project will also remain flexible and open to new digital assets and opportunities that will best engage the community to remain current.



Community Programs

The Project has a close relationship with Implemental (Wheel of Wellbeing) and will continue to assist in building the capacity of the Townsville Community around the education and application of the Wheel. The Project also seeks to open 2 rounds of grant opportunities that will enable community groups or individuals with a small grant to contribute to improving mental health and well-being within Townsville. Sponsorship of hosted events will also contribute to the engagement of Townsville towards the project.



Events and Promotions

MHCT will build upon the first Expo in partnership with the Townsville City Council (TCC) to grow the attendance and participation of both guests and contributors. There will be ample opportunity to be an event partner led by large community organisations to further support the advocacy of mental health in North Queensland. The MHCT project team will also increase attendance at industry conferences to further expand the visibility of the project and increase networking opportunities.



Mental Health in the Workplace

MHCT will continue to deliver workshops targeted towards business and small operators in the Townsville community. The Mentally Healthy Workplace Toolkit has been delivered to date in partnership with Work Health and Safety Queensland.



Mental Health in Schools

MHCT will support various educational institutions via assisting the delivery of well-being in schools ranging from Early Years centres to Tertiary institutions and provide further opportunities for workplace and community well-being. There are existing frameworks, initiatives and objectives set within State, Private and Catholic education systems that MHCT will utilise.



MHC Pledges and Industry Alliances

Further improving on already established industry partnerships, MHCT is continuing to develop the Pledge element for organisations, individuals and community groups. As advocacy has been successful during the first phase, there is more that can be achieved with local, state, and national organisations in providing input towards legislative and cultural developments.



MHC Champions and Advocates

MHC Champions are reputable and influential members in the Townsville Community from various industries to further awareness and participation. The Advocates are embedded in the community and can be any individual wanting to support the MHC Vision voluntarily.

Mentally Healthy City Essentials

The Mentally Healthy City (MHC) Essentials document is a collation of 2 approaches: 1 the European Alliance against Depression, and 2 the model adopted by the Mentally Healthy Cities Alliance called I-Circle which includes cities such as Philadelphia and London. The Townsville MHC Essentials is framed against the Australian recognised Step Care Model and is aligned to a Health Activation Approach. The basis for MHC Essentials is to ensure there is a focus on overall wellness for the individual and Townsville community to improve education and personal empowerment for self-care, whilst also reducing the stigma around mental health.





Phase 1 Highlights

Since July 2018 MHCT has achieved many notable successes and we believe, exceeded expectations set for Phase 1 especially with the impact of a natural disaster early 2019. Whilst a total list of achievements is available, a few of the most notable include:

- Invitations to sit on multiple Disaster Recovery Task Groups with a focus on mental health and well-being
- Promotion and support of local businesses and groups in community health and well-being
- Hit the Hill
- Contribution to the Queensland Mental Health Commission's State of Mind Strategy
- Partnered with Work Health and Safety QLD to provide free mental health workshops in Townsville (normally held in South East QLD)
- Partnered with Relationships Australia to deliver Wheel of Wellbeing workshops in Townsville (normally held in South East QLD)
- Supported multiple local organisations with letters of support to successfully obtain funding (e.g. Co-Responder)
- Partnered with Mental Health Australia, and QLD Alliance for Mental Health to bring the achieved World Record Attempt to Townsville for World Mental Health Day 2019
- Partnered with Australia and New Zealand Mental Health Association to host the first Frontline Mental Health Conference in Townsville 2019
- Partnered with Townsville City Council to deliver the first Mentally Healthy City Wellness Expo in Townsville, networking over 100 mental health and well-being organisations for a free community event

Wheel of Well-being

The Wheel of Well-being (WoW) is a framework that has been developed with communities and organisations to shape new ways to improve well-being. WoW is based on six universal aspects of well-being: body, mind, spirit, people, place, planet and incorporates the five ways of well-being.

WoW is made accessible through a unique, colourful brand and visual style which engages people around the subject of living happier lives. The WoW has been designed to be adaptable and tailored to different groups.

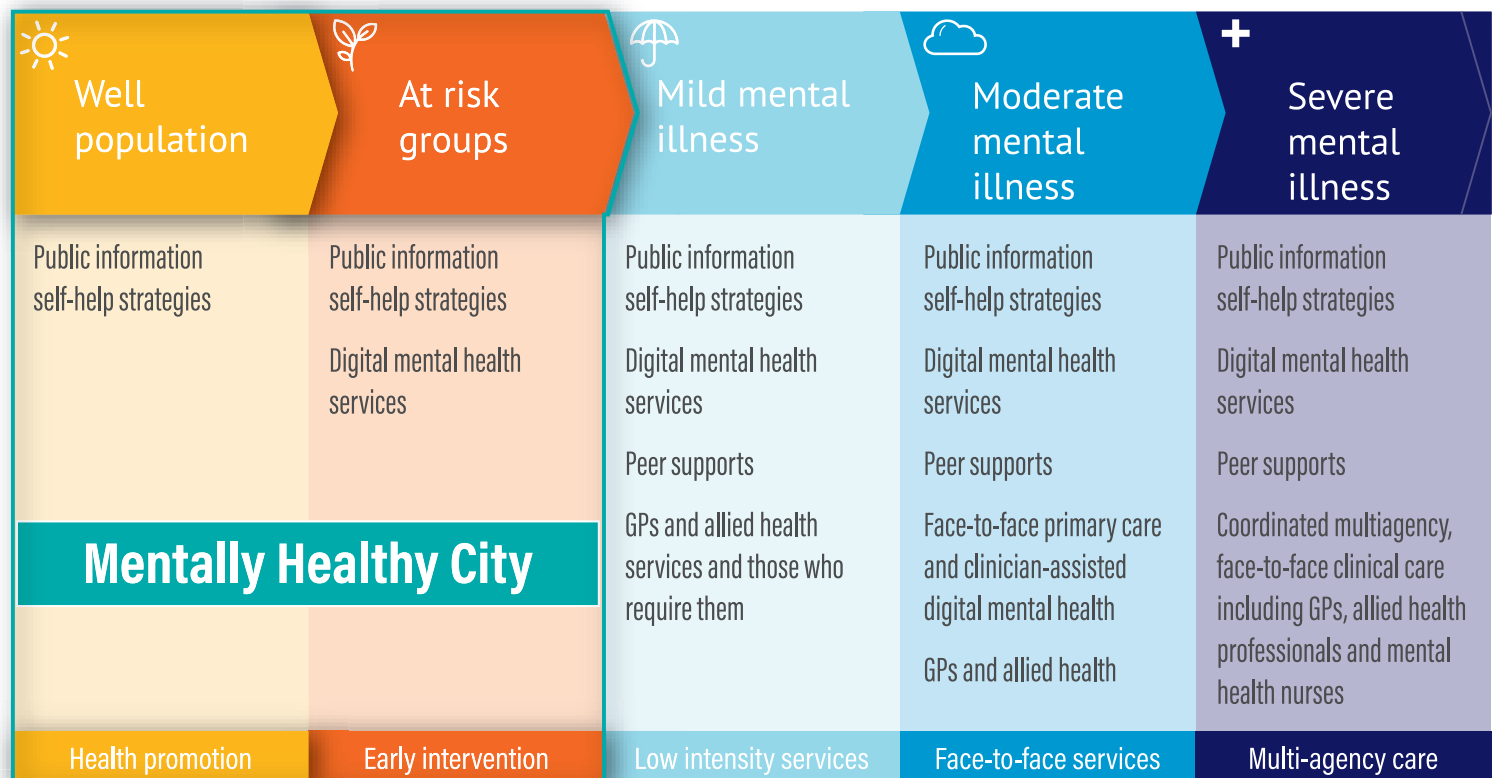
Wheel of Well-being



Step Care Model

Whilst we are not a mental health service provider, we are collaborating with existing service providers to assist them in their delivery of best practice mental health frameworks in Townsville, North Queensland.

Stepped care is defined as an evidence based, staged system comprising a hierarchy of interventions, from the least to the most intensive, matched to the individual's needs.



Contact us for sponsorship opportunities, general enquiries or more information

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Reference: Buckby, B., Stodden, A., and Lutkin, S. (2016). *Preventing Suicide in the North: developing capacity, local knowledge and skills*. [monograph]

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