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New Gippsland PHN update highlights rising demand and pathways to improve care

Gippsland Primary Health Network (PHN) has released its June 2026 *Tell Gippsland PHN* update, providing a snapshot of the region's health system strengths and challenges, and opportunities to improve health and wellbeing care.

Drawing on feedback from community members, health professionals and advisory groups, the update highlights high demand for mental health and alcohol and other drug services, workforce shortages, and ongoing barriers to accessing affordable primary care.

The report also identifies positive developments across the region including increased use of online health services, strong demand for mobile women's health clinics, and the launch of the Health on Wheels outreach service supporting people experiencing homelessness.

What we heard:

- There are opportunities to improve mental health and alcohol and other drug services - particularly pathways for people with dual diagnosis
- Growing demand exists for mental health support for children and young people, alongside workforce shortages
- People are experiencing challenges accessing affordable GP services in some rural and remote areas, with allied health and podiatry workforce shortages impacting service availability also
- There are increasing social and economic pressures affecting health care access in the region including homelessness, transport barriers and rising living costs
- Health system challenges include gap fees limiting access to specialist services, the need for improved coordination between providers, and pressure on local hospitals

Gippsland PHN is continuing to respond to these challenges through targeted initiatives and partnerships and makes several recommendations in the update to improve health outcomes in the region including:

- Strengthening service models and access by co-locating mental health and alcohol and other drug services with emergency departments; expanding primary care capacity for people with complex, intersecting needs; and supporting increased awareness of bulk billing GP options
- Investing in workforce capability and sustainability through supporting a salaried nurse practitioner model; upskilling GPs, nurses and allied health providers -

especially in child and youth mental health; and implementing workforce attraction and retention strategies

- Improving access and inclusion for priority communities through outreach, walk-in clinics, and low or no-cost services
- Embedding lived experience perspectives into new models of care through co-design and incorporating personal stories into health messaging
- Enhancing emergency preparedness including support for community hubs

Gippsland PHN Chief Executive Officer, Amanda Proposch, said that by listening to our communities and health workforce, the organisation can better understand local needs and continue to take action to improve access, coordination and quality of care across the region.

“Our latest Tell Gippsland PHN update reflects what our communities are telling us - that access to affordable, timely care is a challenge for many. We remain committed to working with our partners to support a more person-centred, connected and accessible system that makes it easier for people to get the support they need,” Ms Proposch said.

“The update also highlights a number of positive developments across Gippsland, including innovative service models and strong collaboration across the health system, demonstrating the commitment of local providers to improving access and outcomes for our communities.”

Tell Gippsland PHN plays an important role in capturing local insights and identifying opportunities for improvement, helping to guide future health care planning and investment across the region.

For more information or to access the full update, visit the [Gippsland PHN website](#).

Gippsland PHN welcomes insights and feedback from the community and health professionals. Tell us about your health and wellbeing ideas and experiences by [completing this survey](#) and help shape a measurably healthier Gippsland.

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