



Infant, Child, and Adolescent System Transformation Program Update – October 2024

The [Final Report of the Ministerial Taskforce into Public Mental Health Services for Infants, Children and Adolescents aged 0 – 18 years in Western Australia](#) (ICA Taskforce) was released in March 2022.

The State Government is committed to progressing all eight defined key actions which will see system-wide reform of Infant, Child and Adolescent mental health services.

Considerable progress has been made in transforming the mental health system for Infants, Children and Adolescents, including investing a total of \$143.6m since 2022-23.

To date, the ICA Implementation Program has focused on progressing the immediate and short-term recommendations of the ICA Taskforce. This includes:

- Developing a suite of system principles and a Phased Implementation Plan, in consultation with stakeholders, to set the foundation for the future system.
- Collaboratively designing twelve new and/or adapted models of care.
- Expanding the frontline infant, child and adolescent mental health workforce in regional Western Australia.
- Enhancing the [Lived Experience \(Peer\) Workforces](#), helping ensure appropriate resources are in place to safely embed Lived Experience (Peer) workers into mental health and alcohol and other drug services.
- Enhancing crisis response for infants, children and adolescents, specifically;
 - Expanding [Crisis Connect](#) - an emergency telehealth service for metropolitan consumers and their families.
 - Establishing a new virtual crisis intervention, and post-Emergency Department (ED) presentation follow up service for infants, children and adolescents in regional areas.
 - Identifying actions required to develop a sustainable, supported infant, child and adolescent mental health workforce into the future.

On 27 April 2023 the [State Government announced](#) a \$35.5 million commitment to ICA mental health services, as outlined below:

- On 11 April 2024 the [Community Infant Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service \(ICAMHS\)](#) pilot in Bunbury was opened. The ICAMHS service is located across two sites, Bunbury and Busselton, consisting of a multidisciplinary team to providing local integrated mental health care for infants, children and adolescents aged 0-17 years old. [More information on the service can be viewed via this link.](#)
- Funding to continue the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service frontline workforce.
- The 2.5 year (East Metropolitan) [Acute Care and Response Team \(ACRT\)](#) pilot commenced on 25 March 2024. ACRTs provide mobile outreach and crisis support services for children and adolescents up to the age of 18 years, providing a greater connection between ED and community services, ensuring young people are provided care close to home.
- The regional post-ED follow up service, Brief Crisis Intervention commenced.
- Upskilling the existing Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service workforce who primarily work with children and adolescents with personality disorders.
- Recruitment of Aboriginal Mental Health Workers in WA Country Health Service and Child and Adolescent Health Service.
- Commencement of the reconfiguration of Perth Children's Hospital Mental Health Inpatient Unit (Ward 5A), which provides multidisciplinary, recovery-focused care to children and adolescents aged 15 and younger with complex and acute mental health issues.

As part of the 2024-25 State Budget, the [State Government committed](#) a further \$46.6 million to continue transforming the infant, child and adolescent mental health system including:

- The expansion of east based Acute Care and Response Team and establishment of three new Acute Care and Response Teams across Perth and the Great Southern. These teams will offer care to children in their homes and communities or via phone or videocall. This means infants children and adolescents, and their families will not have to travel to a clinic or attend an Emergency Department to receive crisis care. They will work closely with community Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to offer additional care to those who need it. This funding will extend the existing team in Perth's east and create new teams in Perth's north and south, making sure all children and adolescents in the metropolitan area have equal access to crisis care. This funding will also create the State's first regional team in the Great Southern.
- Continued expansion of [Crisis Connect](#). This service provides 24/7 phone or video call support to children and adolescents, people experiencing a mental health crisis, as well as support and advice to families and professionals. With this funding, Crisis Connect will continue offering two weeks of follow-up care to children and adolescents who contact the service.
- Continued funding to support regional health professionals to care for children and adolescents presenting with mental health concerns by enabling virtual assistance from ICA mental health practitioners. This funding will enable an expansion of brief crisis intervention, resulting in regional children and adolescents receiving follow-up care after presenting at a regional emergency service with mental health concerns.

Next Steps

The Mental Health Commission will be establishing a forward-facing ICA website, this will provide live and up to date information on the ICA program of works.

Please direct any queries to the Infant, Child and Adolescent System Transformation Program via ica.implementation@mhc.wa.gov.au.