

Guide to Mental Health Care Plan Referrals (Better Access Initiative) for GPs

Valid Referral Requirements

Services Australia states:

“There's no standard form for referrals. You can refer patients for allied mental health services with a signed and dated letter.

The referral should include:

- name
- date of birth
- address
- the patient's symptoms or diagnosis
- the number of treatment services the patient needs to receive
- a statement about whether the patient has a GPMHTP, shared care plan or a psychiatrist assessment and management plan.”

(Services Australia, 2 March 2021: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/organisations/health-professionals/topics/education-guide-better-access-mental-health-care-eligible-health-professionals/35591>)

Further to this, Mullumbimby Psychology requires both a cover letter **and** a copy of the complete Mental Health Treatment Plan at the initial session. Subsequent review points are recommended to have both the cover letter and MHTP, but the cover letter only may be accepted if it contains the above details.

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If a referral is incomplete or invalid, our reception team will request the GP to provide clarification. The existing cover letter or MHTP can be updated with the requested details, but clarification can also be provided as an addendum. Our contact methods include Medical Objects, email, or fax.

Email: support@mullumbimbypsychology.com.au

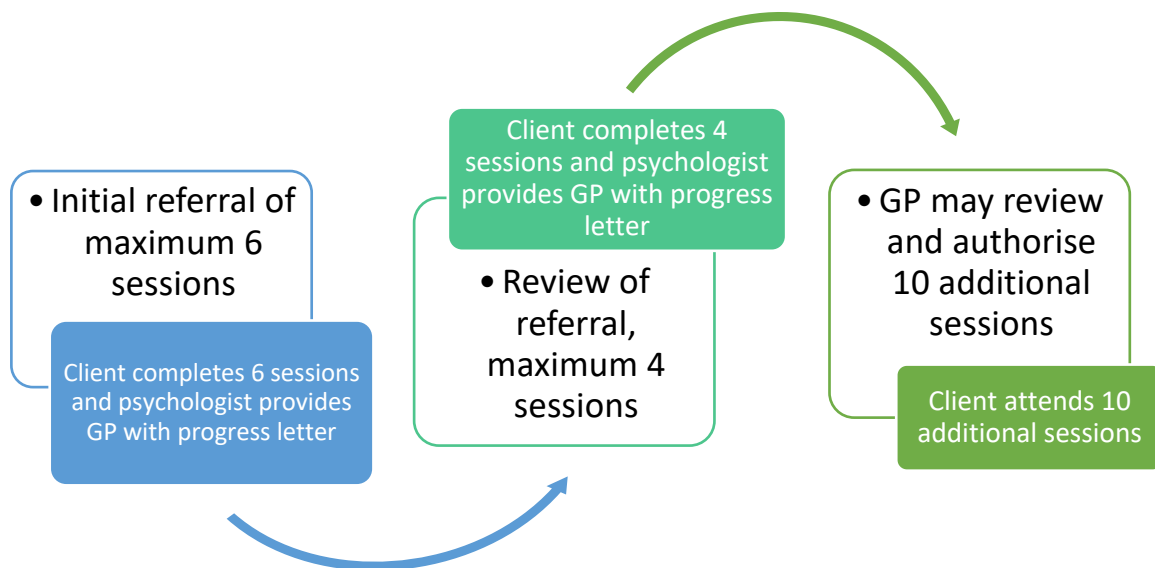
Fax: 02 6684 4793

A Mental Health Treatment Plan template, authored by the Department of Health, can be found at the following link: https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/09/better-access-gp-mental-health-treatment-plan-template_0.pdf.

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Referral Pacing



Initial MHTP and Reviews

- A review can be made 4 weeks after an initial MHTP has been created
- There must be at least 3 months between MHTP reviews
- One initial MHTP (up to 6 sessions) can be created per calendar year, but not within the 3 months after a review has been created (even if completed in the prior calendar year)

(Services Australia, 2 March 2021: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/organisations/health-professionals/topics/education-guide-better-access-mental-health-care-eligible-health-professionals/35591>)

Additional 10 (COVID-19) Review

- An additional 10 MHTP may only be created if a client has used all available initial 10 sessions under the Better Access initiative
- If the client does not use all 10 additional MHTP sessions, they will roll over into the new calendar year
- If a review of a standard MHTP has been created within the last 3 months, only a cover letter is required to authorise the additional 10 (i.e. it does not need to be billed to Medicare)

(Department of Health, 9 October 2020:

[http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/240DC3AF97EEAF79CA2585BC00827909/\\$File/Factsheet-Practitioners-Mental-Health-Services-COVID-19.pdf](http://www.mbsonline.gov.au/internet/mbsonline/publishing.nsf/Content/240DC3AF97EEAF79CA2585BC00827909/$File/Factsheet-Practitioners-Mental-Health-Services-COVID-19.pdf))



Addendum for Connect to Wellbeing Referrals

Mullumbimby Psychology accepts referrals under Connect to Wellbeing Psychological Services and Suicide Prevention Services. Referrals for existing clients can be accepted for immediate use. Please note that if our practice is unable to accept a new client for an immediate appointment, Connect to Wellbeing is likely to refer the client elsewhere.

To check the eligibility criteria for clients, access the following link and select the relevant referral category (Psychological Services or Suicide Prevention Services):

<https://nc.connecttowellbeing.org.au/mental-health-support>. Eligibility criteria can be found on the referral form for each program. If in need of clarification around eligibility, please contact Connect to Wellbeing on 1300 160 339.

Please note there are two Connect to Wellbeing divisions, North Coast NSW and Northern QLD. As referral forms are specific to the division, please take care to ensure you are on the North Coast NSW page (to check, see the top right-hand corner of the website).

A current Mental Health Care Plan is required to refer to the Connect to Wellbeing program and should be attached to the referral. A client is unable to access both a Connect to Wellbeing referral and a Better Access referral in the same financial year.

The Connect to Wellbeing referral procedure is as follows:

1. Upon creation by the GP, the referral is sent directly to the program intake team by fax on 02 8212 8936 or by email at connecttowellbeingNC@neaminational.org.au.
2. The intake team reviews the referral to determine eligibility criteria has been met and then approve or reject the application.
3. If approved, the intake team then release the application to the preferred service provider or next most suitable available service provider. The service provider then views this referral and accepts or declines.
4. The service provider then contacts the client to advise of acceptance or, if unavailable, the Connect to Wellbeing intake team contacts the client to discuss reallocation to another service provider.

