



- MEDIA RELEASE -

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Northern Territory Mental Health Week - less than a week to go!

With less than a week until NT Mental Health Week kicks off, the Northern Territory Mental Health Coalition is encouraging residents and communities across the NT to get involved!

NT Mental Health Week is part of a national mental health promotion campaign held in October each year, and incorporates World Mental Health Day, held globally on October 10th. Mental Health Week 2022 runs from **8 - 16 October**, this year with a theme of **'Awareness, Belonging and Connection'**. Raising awareness of supports, having a sense of belonging and staying connected all contribute to good mental health and well-being.

Online and in-person events are held throughout the Northern Territory and across Australia to raise awareness about the importance of good mental health, to reduce stigma associated with mental ill-health and to encourage help-seeking behaviour. Anyone can take part in Mental Health Week, through organising or attending an event, by reaching out to friends, family or workmates, by accessing resources, seeking support and by participating in activities that promote good mental health and wellbeing.

This year, **orange** is the official colour for Mental Health Week in the NT – chosen for its warm, inviting and uplifting influence. People are encouraged to participate by having a **'Wear Orange' day** at their school or workplace, hosting a morning or afternoon tea with orange themed food, or lighting up their home or workplace with orange light globes to start conversations and show that mental health and wellbeing is important to them.

To acknowledge and celebrate the exceptional work of community members in the community mental health sector, NTMHC will also be hosting its annual **Mental Health Week Launch and Award Ceremony on October 10th** at Parliament House. Nominees for the awards are employed or volunteer in various organisations, programs, and locations throughout the Territory. In 2022, we have drawn the highest number of nominations to date.

Hon Lauren Moss MLA, Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention will launch the week, and present awards to the winners alongside Geoff Radford, CEO of the NT Mental Health Coalition, the peak body for community mental health in the NT.

"This is an important annual event where the community comes together to acknowledge the importance of maintaining our mental health and reduce stigma associated with seeking help," says Geoff Radford.

"Nearly half of Australians (46%) will experience poor mental health during their lifetime – this will impact family members, friends, work colleagues and community members. It's important that people are aware of the supports that are available, are not afraid to reach out and seek help and check in on each other," Radford says.

The reality is, the uptake of mental health services in the Territory is low, especially among young people. This is due in part to the stigma associated with mental illness, and a mental health system that is challenged by a widely dispersed population where resourcing and service delivery for regional and remote communities is more complex, costly and limited. Most services are located in urban centres and skewed to high intensity versus preventative and low intensity care.

Further to this, the social determinants that contribute to poor mental health such as inadequate housing, food insecurity, unemployment, family and domestic violence and intergenerational trauma experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people add further complexity to the mental health sector in the NT.

"Territorians need a long-term plan to remove mental health stigma that encourages Territorians, particularly young people, to seek help," says Geoff Radford.

"We need more resources to support people at the early stages, when they start to feel unwell. And more low to high intensity services need to be available to people where they live, particularly for young people aged 15-24, who make up a quarter of those that are admitted to inpatient facilities".

To find out what's happening, post an event or download free resources including a participation kit, posters, and social media tiles and banners people can visit the NT Mental Health Week website at www.ntmhc.org.au/nt-mental-health-week/. Regular updates on Mental Health Week will also be posted on our [Facebook Page](#) and the NT Mental Health Week website.

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