



Preventive Mental Health Conference 2026

‘Doing Better – Working together to promote and protect the mental health and wellbeing of people in Australia.’

Tuesday 24 to Wednesday 25 March 2026

Novotel Parramatta

Parramatta (Sydney)/Dharug Country, NSW

Printable Program

Last updated 19 March 2026



Time	Room	Session
8:00am – 5:00pm	Atrium	Conference Registration Open
8:00am – 5:00pm	Atrium	Exhibition Open
9:00am – 10:30am	Lennox Ballroom & Plenary Hub	<p>Opening Plenary - How do we move mental health promotion and prevention from niche to mainstream?</p> <p>Welcome to Country – Linda Sainsbury Introductory Remarks – Suzanne Dick, CEO, Prevention United Opening Address – The Hon. Emma McBride, Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention and Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Health Australian Government</p> <p>Session Chair: Dr. Stephen Carbone</p> <p>Keynote Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keynote 1 - Recommendations from the U.S. Consensus Report "Blueprint for a National Prevention Infrastructure for Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Disorders." Speaker: Dr Marthe Gold, Senior Research Scholar, New York Academy of Medicine • Keynote 2 - How a new prevention and early intervention and investment framework can support prevention in mental health Speaker: Dr. Angela Jackson, Commissioner, Social Policy, Australian Government Productivity Commission
10:30am– 11:00am	Atrium	Morning Tea & Exhibition
	Madison Room	<p>SYPPH Networking Meet and Greet – Registration recommended</p> <p><i>This informal meet and greet session is designed for students and early-career professionals to connect with peers, meet fellow attendees, and find a conference buddy to explore sessions and networking opportunities together.</i></p>

Time	Room	Session
11:00am – 12:30pm	Lennox Ballroom & Plenary Hub	<p>Plenary Session 2 - Wisdom Across Nations: Advancing Social and Emotional Wellbeing</p> <p>Session Chair: Ms Kelly Kennington</p> <p>Keynote Presentations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keynote 1 - The Social and Emotional Wellbeing model Speaker: Associate Professor Clinton Schultz, Director First Nations Strategy and Partnerships, Black Dog Institute • Keynote 2 - Social and Emotional Wellbeing Training Speaker: Professor Patricia Dudgeon, Professor, The University of Western Australia • Keynote 3 - Indigenous Knowledges and Mental Health: Ending Disparities in Indigenous Health Speaker: Dr. Suzanne (Ethsi) L. Stewart, PhD, C.Psych, Professor and Director, University of Toronto <p>Those keynote presentations will be followed by a panel discussion and Q&A with the keynotes.</p>

12:30pm– 1:30pm	Atrium & Restaurant	Lunch & Exhibition
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Time	Concurrent Session 1	
Session Name & Room	Presentation Title	Speakers
1A - Together from the Start: Strengthening Early Foundations (Long Orals) Lennox Ballroom	Keeping Kids Connected: Embedding Social-Emotional Learning and Child-Safety Education into Australian schools	Mrs Rita Maher
	Evaluation of the Queensland Ed-LinQ Program Connecting Schools and Mental Health Services	Mrs Claire Fairley Dr. Elena Swift Dr. Clea Headley
	Helping young adults in Western Australia find their way to okay	Miss Rebecca Salsano Miss Sophie Hammond
	Australian primary schools' perspectives on student wellbeing priorities and program adoption influences	Associate Professor Rebecca Hodder
	Mentally Health Schools: promoting mental health and wellbeing	Professor Sharyn Burns
	Adolescent mental health and prevention: findings from the Future Proofing Study	Dr. Lyndsay Brown

	Young and Wise: Embedding Youth Voice in Health Policy and Advocacy	Ms Sarah Lake Ms. Sachini (Tiara) De Silva
1B - Shaping Stronger Systems (Long Orals) Madison Room	To what degree is primary prevention included in Australian mental health policies?	Dr. Jaelea Skehan OAM
	The importance of everyday actions on mental health: The Big 5 Framework	Professor Nick Titov
	Seeing Multiple Systems Clearly: Mapping Diverse Lived Experiences of Mental Wellbeing	Mr Matt Healey
	From Fragmentation to Collaboration: The Local Model for Mental Health & Wellbeing	Ms Emma Grose Ms Rebecca Ponchard
	Enhancing lifelong wellbeing through a systems approach to building capacity and capability	Ms Sophie Morson
	Reversing the creep: Should we reassess our approach to mental health literacy?	Ms Maja Havrilova
	Structural prevention: can alienation be reduced under capitalism?	Dr. Julia Anaf
1C - Learning from Diversity to Drive Prevention (Long Orals) Linden Room	Climate Crisis and Indigenous Youth Mental Health: Identifying Preventions and Solutions	Dr. Suzanne Stewart Mr Keith McCrady Mr Shiva Acharya
	Building Mentally Healthy Communities: Co-Designing Scalable Psychosocial Supports Outside the NDIS	Kris Sargeant
	A scoping review of Indigenous children’s social and emotional wellbeing initiatives	Professor Michelle Dickson Ms Matilde Petersen
	Deadly Minds: Embedding Mindfulness Movement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing	Mrs Charlene Carlisle Mrs Sharnell Avery
	Storying BlaQ cultural determinants of health	Professor Jen Evans
	My Story Cards: A Culturally Grounded Visual Tool for Exploring Well-Being	Ms Jude Page
	Co-designing a Bangla Mental Health Sign Language Bank for Deaf Communities	Dr. M Tasdik Hasan
1D - Strengthening Wellbeing at Every Age (Long Orals) Avalon Room	Postnatal group therapy for anxiety and depression – treatment and prevention?	Dr. Jessica Appleton
	Parenting as a Team: Stronger Partnerships, Thriving Families, Happier Kids	Ms Elizabeth Neal
	Neighbourhood social fragmentation and psychological distress among middle-aged Australians: A longitudinal study	Mr Vincent Learnihan
	Mental Health Impacts of Stressful Life Events in Older Australians Over Time	Mr. Md. Mahmudul Hasan Sagar
	Working Beyond the Traditional Retirement Age and Health in Later Life	Mr. Md. Mahmudul Hasan Sagar
	Moving Minds and Bodies: Addressing Loneliness and Depression in Seniors through Dance	Ms Gwen Korebrits
1E – Workshop 1 Jarrah Room	Title: Prevention in Action: Nothing About Us, Without Us	
	Hosted by: Prevention United	
Space limited!		
Registration free but mandatory - Only available to face-to-face conference delegates	Facilitated by: Ms. Hong Hanh (Hani) Nguyen, Community Engagement Lead - Prevention United & Tessa Mithieux, Senior Manager of Media and Government Relations, ReachOut	
	Presenters include:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Em Howells, Youth Ambassador, Prevention United 	

- Binusha Pathirana, Youth Ambassador, Prevention United
- Jasmine Toronis, Youth Ambassador, Prevention United
- Maddie Doudney, Youth Advocate, Reach Out
- Georgia Evans, Youth Advocate, Reach Out

3:00pm – 3:30pm Afternoon Tea & Exhibition

Atrium

Time	Room	Session
3:30pm – 5:00pm	Lennox Ballroom & Plenary Hub	<p>Plenary Session 3 - Safety by Design: A Foundation for Preventing Mental Health Concerns</p> <p>Session Chair: Dr. Jaelea Skehan OAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keynote 1 - Designing safer digital environments Speaker: Professor Jo Robinson AM, Head of Youth Suicide Prevention Research, Orygen • Keynote 2 - Why good job design is central to mentally healthy workplaces Speaker: Mr Mark Oostergo, CEO & Principal Psychologist, APS • Keynote 3 - Co designing solutions that genuinely reflect what matters to young people Speaker: Dr. Sarthak Gandhi, Board Youth Advisor, headspace <p>Followed by a panel discussion where the keynote speakers listed above will be joined by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Anais Arrighi, Senior Advisor, eSafety Commissioner • Ms Esther McKay, Advisory Group Member, Everymind Lived Experience
5:00pm – 7:00pm	Atrium & Restaurant	Welcome Reception & Exhibition
5:00pm – 5.10pm	Lennox Ballroom	<p>PHAA Mental Health SIG Awards</p> <p><i>Immediately after Plenary Session 3, the PHAA Mental Health Special Interest Group will present the Mental Health Champion and Emerging Voice in Mental Health 2026 Awards.</i></p>

Time	Room	Session
8:00am – 3:30pm	Ballroom Gallery	Conference Registration Open
8:00am – 3:30pm	Ballroom Gallery	Exhibition Open
9:00am – 10:30am	Lennox Ballroom & Plenary Hub	<p>Plenary Session 4 - Can digital help us do better in prevention? What’s working, what’s not, what’s next.</p> <p>Panel moderator: Mr Tom Mulvaney, Australasia Director Men’s Health, Movember</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professor Nick Titov, Executive Director, MindSpot, Macquarie University 2. Ms Carlyn Christian, Director of Impact Campaigns, Movember 3. Dr. Addie Wootten, Director of Strategic Engagement, Smiling Mind 4. Ms Elisa Horan, Client Partner, Shannon Behaviour Change
10:30am– 11:00am	Atrium	Morning Tea & Exhibition

Time	Concurrent Session 2		
11:00am – 12:30pm	Session Name & Room	Presentation Title	Speakers
2A - Pathways to Wellbeing: Community Perspectives in Action (Rapid Fires) Lennox Ballroom		Building collaborative partnerships to promote mental health and wellbeing in the community	Professor Christina Pollard Ms Jessica Nella
		Social Prescribing for Prevention: Connecting Communities to Build Mental Resilience	Dr. Shreya Anil Chauhan
		National survey of community attitudes to prevention of mental health problems	Associate Professor Amy Morgan
		5 Ways to Wellbeing, implementation within community health - health promotion setting	Mrs Natalia March (Smith) Mr Sebastian Goscha
		The postcode effect: Access to recreational spaces and adolescent mental health	Dr. Scarlett Smout
		The Grit and Resilience Festival Community-led celebration of Connection & Mental Wellbeing	Mrs Bek Nash-Webster
		Good Policy, Poor Fit? What small-medium businesses need for mental health prevention	Ms Kristy Burns
		Let’s Talk TACTICS: A Practical, Preventative Framework for Effective Communication	Ms Malinda Guest
		The contribution of crime to neighbourhood disadvantage and mental well-being, 2009-2016.	Ms Emily Davis
		Implementing a systemic approach to wellbeing promotion	Dr. Matt Fisher

2B - Digger deeper: What is the evidence telling us? (Rapid Fires) Madison Room	From Data to Action: COVID-19's Impact on Child Wellbeing and Local Solutions	Dr. Leona Pascoe
	Mixed-method evaluation of structure, process and outcome of mental health crisis interventions	Dr. Nazmul Huda
	Pharmacological/psychosocial interventions for children in out-of-home care with mental health difficulties	Dr. Nazmul Huda
	Mental health and wellbeing programs currently being implemented in Australian primary schools	Dr. Kate Bartlem
	Understanding Disordered Eating in Schools: Global Prevalence, Risk Factors, and Research-to-Practice Integration	Mrs Jessica Morgan Thi Ngoc-Anh Hoang
	Bridging Digital Gaps: Youth-Led Tech Mediation for Mental Health Equity	Dr. Shreya Anil Chauhan
2C - The Future of Prevention: Insights, Signals, and Stories (Rapid Fires) Linden Room	Depression and One-Carbon Metabolism: An Anthropogenetic Study in North India	Dr. Gurjinder Kaur Brar
	Connecting Our Way	Professor Michelle Dickson Ms Danielle Cameron
	Community stories of rural mental health - inspiring hope and overcoming adversity	Mrs Naomi Viret
	Picturing Well-Being: Using Visual Elicitation to Identify and Understand Well-Being Needs	Ms Jude Page
	Way to Wellness: Optimising emotional wellbeing while awaiting surgery	Miss Clare Pekin
	Trauma-Informed Mindful Breath, Movement & Music Meditation for Youth Mental Health	Ms Beata Heymann
	Mental health service use after minor to moderate motor vehicle crash injuries	Miss Simone Yu
	"Safety planning" done better: A standardised cross-sector approach to supporting young Australians	Dr. Stephen Spencer
2D - Wider Voices, Bigger Change (Mixed Formats) Avalon Room	Evolution of the Act Belong Commit® campaign for population mental wellbeing	Professor Christina Pollard Ms Jessica Nella
	Old School Night Out. Strengthening Rural Connection Through Music and Community	Mrs Bek Nash-Webster
	Be Nice to Brain - Preventing mental health harm from alcohol	Mr Cameron Banks
	Investigating young adults' media mental health literacy: A questionnaire-based study	Ms Shi Dai
	Navigating the challenges of amplifying lived experience in mental health advocacy	Ms Jessica James
	Reaching the Right Care: Migrant Women's Experiences of Perinatal Mental Health Support in Australia	A/prof Jacqueline Boyle
	Addressing stigma in alcohol use in pregnancy and FASD: a scoping review	Miss Jessica Ravindran
	YouTube for Mental Health Promotion: Enhancing Equity, Engagement in Diverse Australian Communities	Ms Deena Mehjabeen
	Reality Psychology, a new paradigm for supporting preventive mental health	Assoc. Professor Stephen McKenzie
Why Causal Evidence on Child Maltreatment Demands a Re-prioritisation of Mental Health Investment	Dr. Lucy Grummit	
2E – Workshop 2 Jarrah Room Space limited! Registration free but mandatory - Only available to face-to-face conference delegates	Title: What does effective preventive mental health look like in primary schools - and what will it take to scale it? Hosted by: Smiling Mind Facilitated by: Dr. Addie Wootten, Director of Strategic Engagement, Smiling Mind Presenters include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Louise Birrell, Program Lead of Young People's Mental Health & Wellbeing - The Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use NHMRC Emerging Leader Research Fellow - Faculty of Medicine and Health, The University of Sydney • Dr. Simone Darling, Principal Research Fellow, Team Leader and Senior Program Manager - Murdoch Children's Research Institute 	

- Dr. Addie Wootten, Director of Strategic Engagement - Smiling Mind

12:30pm – 1:30pm Lunch & Exhibition **Atrium & Restaurant**

Time	Concurrent Session 3	
1:30pm – 3:00pm		
Session Name & Room	Presentation Title	Speakers
3A - Partnerships in Action: Designing Better Outcomes (Long Orals) Lennox Ballroom	Changing the Narrative: How Co-Design is Shifting Help-Seeking Behaviours Amongst Regional Men	Mrs Jo Drayton
	Co-designing Digital Support for Postnatal Mental Wellbeing: A Preventive, Strengths-Based Approach	Dr. Rebecca Liackman
	Tharlbarra Maga: Co-designing a culturally grounded mental health tool in Western Australia.	Dr. Astrid Turner Ms Tara Merry Dr. Nia Pulu
	A Case Study of Partnership to Address a Complex Determinant of Health	Ms Irene Verins
	Place-Based Prevention: Systems Thinking in Rural Youth Mental Health Promotion	Dr. Laura Grattidge
	Communicating about suicide and mental health concerns: Partnering with impact across communities	Ms Olivia De Pomeroy
	Her Mental Health Matters: Developing a mental health strategy for regional communities.	Ms Alison Jones
3B - Supporting the Next Generation: Effective Program Approaches (Long Orals) Madison Room	Starting Safely: Embedding "ED Safe" approaches across the First 2000 Days	Ms Hilary Smith Ms Gabrielle Orr
	Nature-based programs for children impacted by family mental illness: The Regenerate program	Ms Inkah Fischer
	Preventing national mental health problems by improving tertiary student mental health	Associate Professor Stephen McKenzie
	Feeling Heard, Connecting, Reflecting: Peer to Peer Story Sharing Amongst University Students	Mr. Ilan Alick Abrahams
3C - Linking Systems, Unlocking Potential (Long Orals) Linden Room	Adapting and evaluating a universal, school-based, LGBTQI+-inclusive, trauma-informed mental ill-health prevention program	Dr. Louise Birrell
	The mental health promotion work of Australia's Suicide Prevention Networks	Dr. Matt Fisher
	Prevention Through Connection: Embedding Nature and Trauma-Informed Practice into Public Mental Health	Ms Kit Kline
	Building Workforce Resilience: A Lived-Experience Approach to Preventing Burnout and Vicarious Trauma	Mr Benn Lockyer
	Implementing a Global primordial Prevention Universal Wellbeing Charter	Ms Susan Stevenson
	Evaluation of an online mental health and suicide gatekeeper resource for parents	Professor Alison Calear
	Building momentum for an Eating Disorder Safe society	Ms Hilary Smith
	Staff and student views on school physical activity and wellbeing program	Associate Professor Rebecca Hodder
	Strengthening primary care professionals' capability to support family, friends and carers	Dr. Philippa Ditton-Phare
	Youth Mental Health Quit Support	Ms Chloe Willats

3D - Building Capacity, Bridging Gaps (Long Orals) Avalon Room	Partnering with purpose: People and culture, and peer workers	Miss Emily Smith Ms Olivia Goodchild
	From Uncertainty to Strength: Sector-Specific Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Training Program	Mrs Jo Drayton

3E – Workshop 3 Jarrah Room Space limited! Registration free but mandatory - Only available to face-to-face conference delegates	Title: Together for Wellbeing: Co-Designing Mental Health Promotion Across Diverse Communities Hosted by: PHAA Mental Health Special Interest Group (SIG) and Mental Health Council of Tasmania Facilitated by: Dr. M Tasdik Hasan, Policy and Advocacy Lead, Mental Health Council of Tasmania; Committee Member, MH SIG, PHAA Presenters include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. M Tasdik Hasan, Policy and Advocacy Lead - Mental Health Council of Tasmania • Dr. Nazmul Huda, Co-Convenor - PHAA Mental Health SIG • Ms Deena Mehjabeen, Co-Convenor - PHAA Mental Health SIG
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3:00pm – 3:30pm	Afternoon Tea & Exhibition	Atrium
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Time	Room	Session
3:30pm – 5:00pm	Lennox Ballroom & Plenary Hub	<p>Closing Plenary – Working and learning together to promote a shared vision</p> <p>Session Chair: Prof. Rosemary Calder Panel Moderator: Mrs Shannon Harvey, Director, Spark Studios</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr David McGrath, CEO, National Mental Health Commission 2. Dr. Peggy Brown AO, Chair, Mental Health Australia 3. Mrs Kellie Horton, Director Policy, Equity and Prevention, Victorian Department Of Health 4. Ms Julia Knapton, Deputy Commissioner System Development Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs, Western Australia Mental Health Commission <p>Presentation on the Joint Consensus Statement - Ms Suzanne Dick, Chief Executive Officer, Prevention United</p> <p>Conference Close - Adjunct Professor Terry Slevin, Chief Executive Officer, Public Health Association of Australia</p>