Frequently Asked Questions

Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service

This document provides further information about the review of the Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service and SA Health’s response to the review.

What is the Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service?

The Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service (OPMHS) is run by the Northern Adelaide Local Health Network (NALHN) as a state-wide service. It provides care and accommodation to older people with complex mental health needs where living in the community or mainstream Residential Aged Care has not been a sustainable option.

What accommodation is provided at the Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service?

Oakden OPMHS is made up of three wards providing care and accommodation to two distinct cohorts of residents:

- The Makk and McLeay Nursing Home provides long term Commonwealth subsidised Residential Aged Care to older people with neurocognitive disorders with very severe and extreme behavioural and psychosocial symptoms of dementia (BPSD).
- The Clements House ward provides older people with complex, severe and enduring mental illness with short-term transitional care while their clinical presentation is stabilised and appropriate longer term care options are identified.

Why was a review of the Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service undertaken?

In response to concerns raised around the quality and provision of clinical care, the Chief Psychiatrist has undertaken an independent review into the provision of care and treatment of residents by the Oakden OPMHS.

What was the review process?

The review process included engagement with a range of stakeholders, both through written submissions, observation and face to face interviews and meetings.

What were the key themes arising from the review?

The Chief Psychiatrist’s review identifies a range of concerns around the model of care, the staffing model, quality and safety, culture and the use of restrictive practices and highlights areas where the current OPMHS does not align with best practice.

What is SA Health’s response to the review?

The findings of the review around the quality and provision of clinical care at Oakden Older Persons Mental Health Service are deeply concerning, and are being treated with the utmost seriousness.

Following consideration of the report findings, the South Australian Government accepts and will implement all of the recommendations made in the independent review.

A number of recommendations are already underway or have been implemented following NALHN’s own investigations and in response to an audit undertaken by the Commonwealth’s Aged Care Quality Agency in February and March 2017.
What immediate actions has SA Health undertaken at the Oakden OPMHS?

Immediate actions have included introducing further senior clinical support at Oakden 24 hours a day, seven days a week; the recruitment of a mental health clinical pharmacist; and engaging an additional senior registered nurse to provide additional clinical leadership after hours and on weekends.

The Review Report identifies a range of concerns around the model of care. How is SA Health addressing this?

SA Health will develop a state-wide Older Persons Mental Health Service Model of Care across all Local Health Networks (LHNs) that aligns with best practice and provides high quality care to older people who live with the most severe forms of disabling mental illness and BPSD.

SA Health will develop a longer term service plan for the treatment of older people in South Australia with severe mental illness and severe and extreme BPSD.

What will happen to Makk and McLeay Nursing Home?

Makk and McLeay Nursing Home will close and residents will be transitioned to more appropriate services to support their care needs.

I have a family member residing in Makk and McLeay Nursing Home. Where will they go?

Residents and their families will be fully consulted to ensure an appropriate placement is identified and a seamless transition can occur.

A range of alternative service options will be discussed with families, including refurbished facilities at Northgate Aged Care, which will be specially adapted for residents, and other appropriate residential aged care facilities.

What will happen to Clements House?

Clements House on the Oakden campus will remain open in the interim following the closure of Makk and McLeay Nursing Home while longer term options are developed. In the longer term Clements House will close and residents will be transitioned to more appropriate services to support their care needs.

I had a family member who resided in Makk and McLeay prior to this review. How can I provide feedback?

SA Health will be writing to all families who had a resident at Makk and McLeay Nursing Home any time since 2008 to inform them of the review and SA Health’s response to it.

Families of existing and former patients of Makk and McLeay Nursing Home can contact (08) 7485 4369 during business hours (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) if they would like to further discuss any issues.

What is the Northgate Aged Care facility?

Northgate Aged Care has been identified as a suitable accommodation option for patients with severe and extreme BPSD. The facility currently accommodates older people with disability who require high levels of care.
How will the Northgate Aged Care facility accommodate additional patients?

Refurbishment works to two vacant buildings at Northgate Aged Care will begin shortly to create specially adapted facilities for up to 16 patients currently housed at Makk and McLeay Nursing Home.

What are the options for other patients?

Options for transitioning residents include other appropriate residential aged care facilities.

Over the coming weeks, SA Health will meet with the families of the residents to discuss the options and preferences for their loved ones.

Where can I find out more information?

Please visit www.sahealth.sa.gov.au or contact (08) 7485 4369 during business hours (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).