

Saltbush Rehabilitation Service

Fact Sheet for Health Professionals

The Saltbush Rehabilitation Service (SRS) expands specialist mental health care in country South Australia, providing the option for people to remain in country and closer to home instead of travelling to metropolitan Adelaide. The Saltbush Rehabilitation Service is a joint initiative of the Australian Government and the South Australian Government. This service is available in regional Whyalla (Country SA). Access to metropolitan rehabilitation services remain for country consumers. All consumers living in rural regions have equal access to country SRS service and Community Rehabilitation Centres (CRC) in metropolitan Adelaide.

What is the SRS?

The SRS is a residential program which offers support to improve mental wellbeing and independence in a community setting.

This will involve living in our residential accommodation, with each house having 1-3 residents. Rehabilitation staff will work with residents to develop an individualised rehabilitation plan which will focus on developing the skills they need to live independently. This plan will assist them to work towards becoming an active participant in their local community and guide them to create a purposeful, meaningful, and healthy life. Their family personal supports and doctor will also be encouraged to be involved in the plan.

Mental Health rehabilitation is the process of facilitating an individual's skill development and may include re-acquiring old skills and learning new skills, so that an individual can achieve their optimal level of functioning, community participation and quality of life in their community of choice.

Rehabilitation practice supports the person to reach their nominated goals and wishes.

It can assist people to achieve and use the strengths and skills, supports and resources necessary for successful and satisfying living learning and working in the environment of their choice.

Who is the SRS intended for?

The SRS may be appropriate for someone living in the community who may benefit from increased support, or someone who currently is engaged with intensive mental health care, who could be supported to transition back to independent living.

It is designed to benefit someone who appears to be challenged by daily activities such as cooking, personal care, domestic duties, social/community engagement and finding employment. They may also wish to engage support to accompany medical appointments or navigating social services such as Centrelink.

The Saltbush Rehabilitation Service is intended to support adults aged 18-65 however people who are younger or older may be accepted by the Allocation Committee if developmentally appropriate and are assessed as suitable for the environment and service.

Choosing Mental Health Rehabilitation in Country

People from any SA country location may be eligible to become a SRS resident; not only those from Whyalla. The Metropolitan mental health Community Rehabilitation Centres also remain an option for any country consumer. While the SRS has been modelled on the CRCs in metropolitan Adelaide, the difference is that SRS residents will stay in residential accommodation rather than in a centre or facility. This format will assist consumers to practice their developing life skills in an environment that promotes independence but is also well supported with staff who are equipped to respond to spontaneous or urgent needs.

Choosing the SRS instead of the metropolitan CRC program means that the skills developed during their stay can be tailored more directly to the country culture and unique challenges, such as public transport options, limited services and smaller communities. Developing living skills in a country community rather than in metropolitan based service means that applying these new skills back in to their regular life will be a smoother and less stressful transition.

How to access the SRS

Access to the SRS will generally be by referral from SA government adult mental health services. Referrals may come from:

- Community Mental Health Teams
- SA Government Mental Health Services
- Community referrals
- Private Psychiatrists, General Practitioners, Non-Government organisations, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations or consumers wishing to access the service can do so through their local Community Mental Health Team.

People may take some time to consider whether they would like to become a SRS resident. It may need to be raised a number of times as a point of discussion to encourage their engagement. Tours of the properties can be arranged through the local Mental Health Team (in person or remotely via DTN or Microsoft Teams etc.)

How does the SRS fit with existing mental health services?

The SRS is part of a stepped approach to mental health care which will relate to and be integrated with other service elements across the continuum of mental health services.

Other local mental health services will continue to function as before, with the SRS providing another referral option to provide optimum care and support for country consumers.

We are proud to be extending the range of specialist mental health services for our country population and anticipate that the benefits of consumers being able to stay closer to home and their support networks will be immense.

For more information

Visit www.sahealth.sa.gov.au

Call Saltbush Rehabilitation Service office (Whyalla – 8644 5130)

Email: Audrey.Mccall@sa.gov.au

Call the Emergency Triage and Liaison Service (ETLS) on 131 465