

Creating opportunities to work strategically across the region with multi-sectoral partners



TIP SHEET 3

Engaging G.P's in collaborative support

The Eastern Mental Health Service Coordination Alliance aims to ensure that people who experience mental ill-health and co-occurring concerns and the people who support them have access to responsive, appropriate and collaborative services to assist with the multiple facets of their individual recovery journey.

EMHSCA have sought advice from G.Ps regarding effective means of collaboration. The following recommendations came from the EMHSCA Collaborative Care Planning Workshops 2015-2017.

Key recommendations

To assist your client to get the time they need in relation to the complexity of their needs –

- book a longer appointment;

- book the first afternoon appointment;

- Let receptionist know if the person attending is anxious about crowded waiting rooms and any other significant barriers to service engagement.

What is the day like for a G.P? They see a lot of people in a day. Some clinics require them to see as many as 6 people per hour. It is challenging to make time for phone calls. New GPs may be more challenged by the role. It becomes easier to manage your sessions with experience. Knowing the patients is important.

It is difficult to find GPs who will work with people who have mental health issues and therefore it may be harder to hand these clients on to a GP.

It is important for people to have a regular GP. The GP can get to know the person and is more able to respond to their needs. They will encourage regular health checks.

Things to consider when Care planning with GPs

GPs see themselves as the leaders of the health team.

GPs are happier if you go to them.

GPs can speak over the phone but keep it brief and arrange a time to speak for longer if required.

Keep GPs informed (with consent of the client). A fax or an email is fine. If something is important then write it in **Bold** or in larger font.

Creating opportunities to work strategically across the region with multi-sectoral partners



TIP SHEET 3

Engaging G.P's in collaborative support

When visiting a GP with your client: please be mindful that the session will be twice as long as if they were alone. Book a time accordingly. Give the client the opportunity to say 'no' to you coming in with them and/or offer for them to see the GP alone first then enter part way through.

Time and money are big issues when GPs are asked to be collaborative with other service providers. Encourage GPs when you speak with them. Help them to see the benefits in collaborating.

When requesting a Mental Health plan: for someone be mindful that if the person has possible or diagnosed psychosis they will need a Psychiatrist. If they have anxiety and or depression they will possibly benefit more from a Psychologist. Not all GPs are keen to do Mental Health Plans. GPs need to complete special training to enable them to get a higher rebate for providing a MH plan.

Notes on Patient Records: The GP practice owns the person's record. The patient needs to request for the transfer of their record. The Doctor is obliged to provide a summary and medication list. The transfer requires a signed request from doctor and patient.