



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **SCHS welcomes additional funding for drug treatment services**

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“Sunraysia Community Health Services is pleased to see the government invest in more face-to-face services for local people recovering from substance misuse in Mildura” said Mr Craig Stanbridge, Chief Executive Officer, SCHS.

Today the Department of Health and Human Services has announced that under its ICE action plan it will fund SCHS to provide non-residential rehabilitation programs in the Mildura community. “This will allow SCHS to provide intensive, structured group programs locally for up to 50 people per year to address the psychosocial causes underlying their drug dependence issues”, said Mr Stanbridge.

Currently there are no group rehabilitation programs available locally, so clients have to undertake one-on-one counselling services or travel away from Mildura for residential rehabilitation programs. “Being able to stay in your own community is important for many clients while completing a drug rehabilitation program, as it allows them to maintain their connections with family, friends and community”, said Mr Stanbridge.

These support networks are an important part of the rehabilitation process, as substance use is not just an isolated aspect within a person’s life and cannot be treated in isolation. The program SCHS has been funded to provide will help the client address their substance use issues, but will also assist the client to improve other important aspects of their life, which will more likely result in long term success for the client.

While individual treatment programs can be effective, group programs provide a greater reach to clients and research suggests provides a stronger support network for the client. The diversity of different people in the group helps give clients different perspectives on situations and provides them with additional tools on how other people tackle problems and make positive changes.

Mr Stanbridge says that “SCHS’s model will provide a daily 6-week program, operating Monday to Friday, of core and elective modules to help individualise the program to meet the needs of the client”.

The core modules of the program will include: cognitive behaviour change, mood and anger management, mindfulness activities, collaborative therapy, motivational enhancement



therapy and relapse prevention. A range of elective modules will also be developed to tailor the program to meet the individual needs of the client, including living skills, parenting, family relationships and exercise and relaxation.

“Over the next couple of months staff will be appointed and the programs will be developed in more detail”, said Mr Stanbridge. “The group programs will then be ready to commence operation from October”.

**END**

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