

Mental Health

Positive mental health depends on the social, political, economic, cultural and physical aspects of life. The lived experience of mental or emotional distress often manifest from social hardships or traumatic experiences. Therefore an essential part of preventing mental health issues is to address broader social determinants and to ensure that when people are receiving treatment and support, that life circumstances are also addressed. People with lived experience¹ have the right to live free from stigma, discrimination and exclusion. Western Australia must have a mental health policy framework that actively removes barriers to social and civic participation.

The Greens (WA) are committed to a model of care and service delivery underpinned by the principles of the recovery movement². These principles are the recognition of the multiple complex influences on mental health and the promotion of active participation of individuals accessing those services this movement is led by people with lived experience and the model is recognised as having the best outcomes for people seeking mental health services.

The vital role of carers should be better acknowledged, respected and supported. Research into reducing the incidence of adverse mental health within communities should be prioritised.

The Greens (WA) recognise that for First Nations Peoples, health and well-being is holistic, encompassing all aspects of the inter-related domains of body, mind and emotions, family and kinship, community, culture, Country and spirituality. First Nations Peoples' self-determination is a foundational imperative in all policies, programs or services, both as a social determinant of health, and to ensure culturally safe and secure services. (see also The Greens (WA) [First Nations Peoples](#) policy)

Aims

The Greens (WA) want:

- the transformation of Western Australia's mental health system to centre the needs of people with lived experience¹ and to move towards the recovery model² in every service and facet of the system to both address stigma and promote individuals' recovery processes, while reducing the need for acute care and hospitalisation (see also The Greens (WA) [Health](#) policy)
- the rebalancing of the funding of mental health services so that the majority of funding is directed to prevention, early intervention, and the community managed Mental Health sector in line with the mental health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025
- provision of adequate, affordable, consistent and coordinated services that are accessible for all people experiencing periods of mental illness or distress, particularly in community and peer-based supports
- services and support programs that genuinely promote the recovery process through valuing and harnessing and harnessing people's lived experience

- services and supports to be co-produced³ with clinicians and people with lived experience
- adequate, appropriate and accessible accommodation and social support
- increased funding for the promotion of mental health and well-being, including community education programs, to increase understanding and decrease stigma for accessing supports
- adequate legal support for people accessing mental health services and members of their support networks
- increased funding for lived-experience mental health research
- equitable access to services and supports for people living with co-occurring conditions, including disability, or alcohol and other drug issues (see also The Greens (WA) [Disability](#) and [Drug](#) policies)
- an end to the premature discharging of people who voluntarily present to mental health wards and emergency departments
- to increase professional understanding of, and commitment to, the recovery principles, decreased stigma and discrimination from mental health providers, and increase collaboration, transparency, and accountability within mental health services
- to implement workforce development strategies that address current shortages of clinicians, and expand the provision of the peer workforce⁴

Measures

The Greens (WA) will initiate and support legislation and actions that:

Mental Health Services

- provide a variety of community-based and inpatient clinical mental health services
- ensure all mental health services are culturally appropriate
- empower people to self determine their individual treatment and recovery plans, and ensure individuals' rights to informed consent
- improve and increase mental health services in regional, rural and remote areas
- ensure effective mental health emergency response teams to reduce reliance on police intervention
- increase recognition, support and respite for carers and family members, and their involvement in recovery plans when desired by the individual
- increase the funding and availability of services for people conditions with co-morbid conditions and complex needs, ensuring there is "no wrong door" in accessing services
- work to develop specialised State-wide Services to ensure expertise in the delivery of supports to targeted populations

Coordinating Services

- develop referral pathways accessible to members of the community, clinicians and service providers
- ensure continuity of care and timely follow up services

- provide integrated and coordinated services that support and promote recovery, including peer supports, health, housing, education, employment programs and regular inclusive community and social opportunities
- address homelessness amongst people periodic or persistent mental distress (see also The Greens (WA) [Housing](#) policy)
- provide a range of supported accommodation options and wrap around supports to meet people's individual needs
- ensure refugees and asylum seekers, especially those in government detention, have access to culturally safe and appropriate mental health services in order to address the disproportionate rates of suicide and self-harm

Prevention and Early Intervention

- fund the delivery of mental health and well-being education programs, including school-based, workplace and community programs (see also The Greens (WA) [Education](#) policy)
- increase the availability and range of prevention and early intervention mental health services for children and young people (see also The Greens (WA) [Youth](#) policy)
- provide specialist services for the early years, including parent and infant services
- ensure all mental health services are safe for First Nations, culturally and linguistically diverse people LGBTQIA+ and neurodiverse people, as well as disabled people, seniors and youths (see also The Greens (WA) [Disability](#) and [Seniors](#) policies)
- provide specialist support services for children who have experienced trauma (see also The Greens (WA) [Children](#) policy)

Suicide Prevention and Bereavement

- fund evidence-based suicide prevention programs, including community-level programs and targeted programs for at-risk groups
- provide specialist support post-vention services to those bereaved by suicide, particularly children, that are ongoing as needed and available state-wide

Mental Health and Justice

- provide well funded state-wide court diversion programs and specialised care and support for mentally impaired accused persons (see also The Greens (WA) [Justice](#) policy)
- expand the availability of court intervention programs such as the Start Court⁵ and ensure court intervention programs are also available to children and those living in the regions
- improve the provision of mental health services within correctional facilities and fund the provision of more specialist forensic mental health beds and services
- repeal mandatory sentencing provisions
- fund specialist services for the transportation of people experiencing extreme episodes of distress
- establish Declared Places⁶ as required across Western Australia

- provide immediate and mandatory training in de-escalation techniques and trauma-informed practices for police and correctional services when working with people experiencing mental distress
- provide clients with equitable legal representation that redresses the power imbalance with mental health professionals when seeking legal action in cases of malpractice
- increase funding for specialist mental health legal services such as the Mental Health Law Centre
- ensure continuity of care and timely follow up within best practice guidelines are developed and adhered to

(See also the Australian Greens [Health](#) policy)

Glossary

1. **lived experience** - the experience and the choices of a person, and the knowledge that they gain from these experiences and choices. In the case of mental health, the knowledge gained by an individual living with or through a mental health challenge.
2. **recovery model** - Recovery means gaining and retaining hope, understanding abilities and disabilities, engagement in an active life, personal autonomy, social identity, meaning and purpose in life, and a positive sense of self. Recovery is not synonymous with cure. Recovery refers to both internal conditions experienced by persons who describe themselves as being in recovery and external determinants that influence recovery, such as the social, political, cultural and economic aspects of life.
3. **co-production** is the practice of delivering mental health services in consultation with people with lived experience.
4. **peer workforce** - a peer worker is someone employed on the basis of their personal lived experience. This lived experience is an essential qualification for their job, in addition to other skills and experience required for the particular role they undertake.
5. The **Start Court** is a Magistrates Court that specialises in dealing with offenders who have mental health issues. It is based within the Central Law Courts in the Perth CBD.
6. **Declared Place** - the Criminal Law (Mentally Impaired Accused) Act 1996 (WA) defines a declared place as a place declared to be a place for the detention of the mentally impaired accused. That is, declared places are to house people with intellectual or cognitive disabilities who have been accused of a crime. Declared places focus on rehabilitation and training in a community, home-like environment.

Mental Health policy ratified by The Greens (WA) in 2020

The Greens (WA) mental health spokesperson is [Alison Xamon MLC](#)