

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

Hello and welcome to the Primary & Community Care Services (PCCS) **Psychological Access Plus** program (Access+).

Who is PCCS?

PCCS is a non-government, not-for-profit local health organisation working to make it easier for people to access health and community services. We are funded to deliver Access+ through the support of Sydney North Primary Health Network (PHN) and the Australian Department of Health.

Who is Access+ for?

The Access+ program is primarily for people who have difficulty accessing appropriate mental health (including psychology) support due to financial or other circumstances.

How long is Access+ for?

The program is short-term, and intended to support people with mild to moderate mental health concerns. If you need longer-term supports you may be able to access other services through Sydney North PHN. If you and your GP think this may be required, your GP can call Sydney North PHN's triage team to discuss your needs further.

How am I referred to Access+?

To use Access+ your GP will discuss your needs and, with your consent, provide your information to the triage team at Sydney North PHN. If Access+ is the best service option for you, the triage team shares this information with PCCS in order for us to organise your mental health support services. Once you have been allocated support time through the Access+ program, a mental health professional will contact you to arrange your service. This generally occurs within 2 to 5 business days from when we receive a referral from Sydney North PHN triage team. The professional will discuss with you when you are available for a first appointment, and may ask you about your needs and current wellbeing. Please feel free to discuss with them your preferences in terms of how and when you receive supports and services.

What does Access+ provide?

Access+ can provide support from mental health professionals including psychologists, social workers and mental health nurses. Our services can be provided in collaboration with your GP and/or other health care providers if required to ensure better health outcomes.

How do I receive Access+ supports?

Access+ services can be provided through individual face-to-face counselling sessions, telephone, video-based counselling, or guided self-help depending on what you need and

how you want to receive your services. How you receive your service might change depending on what's happening for you. For example, if you are unable to travel to an appointment in person, you may be able to discuss having a telephone appointment that week instead. Please feel free to discuss with your provider about what works best for your needs.

What are my responsibilities?

The Access+ program will require you to commit to attend all your appointments, and to provide at least 24 hours' notice if you cannot attend an appointment. If you miss more than two (2) appointments or cancel with less than 24 hours' notice, this service may not be appropriate for you and your mental health professional may refer you to your GP for alternative supports.

How is my GP included in my supports?

Your GP will receive feedback from your mental health professional, which may include letting them know that they will be working with you, an initial report, and a final report on how things went when you finish up with Access+.

What else happens with information about my services and supports?

PCCS is committed to protecting your privacy. Our staff and mental health professionals, as well as our partners at Sydney North PHN, are required by law to ensure all your personal information is stored securely and kept confidential. The Access+ team will not release any identifiable information about your services without your permission except where legally required (for example, if there is a risk that you might hurt yourself or someone else or if there is a subpoena). We are also required by our funding organisations to provide bulk de-identified data about the services we provide for reporting and evaluation purposes.

We'd like to reassure that your personal details will always be dealt with confidentially and that at any step of the way, we encourage you to ask questions, and provide comments or feedback.

How do I provide feedback about my services and supports?

If you would like to provide feedback or make a complaint at any time, you can do this by providing feedback to any staff member or email quality@pccs.com.au. If you would like to lodge a formal complaint you can contact the Quality Team on (02) 9477 8700, email details of your complaint to quality@PCCS.com.au, or download and complete the Complaint form at www.pccs.org.au/about-us/feedback/ and mail the completed form to Primary & Community Care Services, PO Box 173, Thornleigh NSW 2120.

As part of our ongoing evaluation and improvement, PCCS has engaged an independent evaluation service called 'Bheard' to assist us with evaluating our services and programs. You may receive a phone call from 'Bheard' inviting you to participate in the evaluation. For more information, please refer to the 'Bheard' brochure on the PCCS website.

How do I find out more information?

If you would like to learn more about the Psychological Access+ program, please visit www.pccs.org.au/consumers/psychological-access-plus or call (02) 9477 8700.

We look forward to supporting you.