

MEDIA RELEASE

FAKE YOUR TAN, NOT YOUR MOOD: Gold Coast takes mental health conversation to the streets

You can fake your tan. Don't fake your mood.

That is the playful message hitting the streets of the Gold Coast for Queensland Mental Health Week, with mobile billboards across beaches and high-traffic community locations like Bunnings, encouraging locals to talk more openly about their mental health.

But behind the cheeky campaign is a serious message: **you don't have to be mentally unwell to look after your mental health.**

Medicare Mental Health Gold Coast provides a simple place to start for people who want to protect or improve their mental health and wellbeing.

That might mean finding strategies, tips or coaching to stay mentally healthy during a stressful period, including while caring for someone you love. It could mean finding additional mental health support that better matches your needs and preferences. Or it might simply mean wanting to feel more connected to other people and finding out what social and community opportunities are available locally.

No diagnosis or referral is required, and people do not need to know what service they need before they make contact.

Professor JR Baker, CEO of Primary & Community Care Services (PCCS), which delivers the Medicare Mental Health phone service on the Gold Coast, said the campaign was designed to broaden the way people think about mental health support.

"On the Gold Coast, we're pretty comfortable talking about beaches, sunshine and fake tans. We want people to become just as comfortable talking about how they're actually feeling."

"You can fake your tan. You shouldn't have to fake your mood."

"But you don't need to be struggling or mentally unwell to talk to us. Mental health is something we all have, and there are things we can do to protect it and improve it."

"You might want some strategies to stay mentally healthy through a stressful time, help finding the right support, or simply more opportunities to connect with other people. We can start with what matters to you and help connect you with the support and opportunities available across the Gold Coast."



The **Fake Your Tan, Not Your Mood** campaign launches on Monday 5 October, as part of Queensland Mental Health Week, which runs from 3–11 October under the theme **Build Community, Build Wellbeing**.

Large mobile billboards will take the message to Gold Coast beaches and high-traffic community locations, kicking off at Bunnings Robina on the public holiday, Monday 5 October.

Professor Baker said taking the conversation out of traditional health settings was deliberate.

“Good mental health isn’t created only inside a clinic. It is built in our homes, workplaces and communities through connection, belonging, purpose and support.”

“So we’re taking the conversation to where people already are – at the beach, at Bunnings and out enjoying their community.”

The initiative is supported by **Gold Coast Primary Health Network (GCPHN)**, which commissions the Medicare Mental Health Gold Coast phone service and Northern Gold Coast Medicare Mental Health Centre.

It comes as GCPHN launches its new **Strategic Plan 2026–2029**, setting a vision of **shaping better health outcomes for every person on the Gold Coast** and a new system-shaping approach focused on making care easier to access, easier to navigate and better connected.

“Gold Coast Primary Health Network’s new strategy affirms our commitment to shape better health outcomes for every person on the Gold Coast,” said GCPHN CEO Angi Bissell.

“By calling the Medicare Mental Health phone service on 1800 595 212, anyone who needs mental support can discuss available pathways and consider what’s right for them. The phone service is a vital touchpoint for starting a conversation, and getting help.”

“For our local community, options like visiting the new Medicare Mental Health Centre that’s opened in Pimpama recently are available too, with no referral, appointment or mental health treatment plan required.”

Medicare Mental Health is an Australian Government initiative providing free mental health information, support and connection to care across Australia.

On the Gold Coast, GCPHN commissions the local phone service and PCCS delivers it, helping people navigate available mental health, wellbeing and community supports and find local Gold Coast options suited to their individual needs.

Professor Baker said that navigation role was particularly important in an increasingly complex health system.



“People shouldn’t have to understand the mental health system before they can get something useful from it.”

“Tell us what is happening in your life, what matters to you and what you would like to be different. We’ll help you work out where to go from there.”

“With Mental Health Month underway in October, this truly is a great time to be proactive about our personal health and wellbeing,” added Ms Bissell.

“No one should ever feel they need to fake their mental health – support is there, it’s accessible, and it’s available for carers, friends and family wanting to get free advice too.”

“Reaching out for a chat is often a great first step towards feeling better, healthier and happier. Speaking up can also help us feel more confident helping those we care about feeling prepared if they’re struggling and need support.”

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY

Photos and video footage

- ‘Fake Your Tan, Not Your Mood’ mobile billboard truck travelling popular Gold Coast locations from Currumbin to Burleigh, and Surfers to Paradise Point from Monday 5 to Friday 9 October to connect with Gold Coasters.
- Campaign creatives featuring Gold Coast tan lines

Spokespeople

- Professor JR Baker, PCCS
- Angi Bissell, GCPHN

Media contacts

For media enquiries, interview requests, and the campaign truck's daily location schedule, contact:

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