

11 May 2023

South West gets with the mental health and wellbeing program

Over the next 12 months, Healthway will support a first-of-its-kind pilot project aimed to improve mental health and social and emotional wellbeing in the South West.

The Busselton Dunsborough Alliance Against Depression (BDAAD) will empower the local community through an evidence-based program to support those with or at risk of mental health conditions, de-stigmatise mental health issues, and raise awareness about the importance of positive mental health and wellbeing.

Increased levels of mental health concerns across all ages in the City of Busselton, coupled with lengthy wait times to access services led to the community identifying the need for the project.

BDAAD secretary Pauline Vigus said working closely with The Western Australian Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA), who had provided oversight during the project's planning phase, had been instrumental in the pilot coming to fruition.

"This pilot project, based on the European Alliance Against Depression and like others currently running in Perth, will be trialled for the first time in the City of Busselton," she said.

"Over the year we will be engaging with local medical practitioners and mental health service providers, introducing public awareness campaigns, and delivering localised mental health training for community leaders and health professionals.

"I'm excited to be able to bring this very important program to the South West and to support the City of Busselton's local community in a positive and meaningful way."

Healthway and Lotterywest CEO Ralph Addis said he looked forward to seeing the great work that will be achieved by BDAAD over the next 12 months.

"This partnership offers a range of opportunities to improve the local community's ability to support those with mental health conditions, particularly those facing depression, and encourage behaviour change leading to good mental health," he said.

"Easy access to mental health services in regional WA should be part of a community's fabric and I am pleased that we are able to support BDAAD in its new venture."

Healthway funds sport, arts, racing, and community events to help WA communities create programs and activities that support good health now and into the future. To find out more visit: www.healthway.wa.gov.au.

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