

## STEPPED CARE TREATMENT for BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER

Illawarra Community Mental Health (NSW Health) and Project Air (University of Wollongong) are currently conducting an evaluation of the effectiveness of a stepped care treatment program for Borderline Personality Disorder. This involves two 'stepped' programs:

1. The **Gold Card Clinic** - a brief intervention (of up to 4 sessions) for people presenting with symptoms of personality vulnerability, such as ongoing patterns of self-harm, suicide thinking and behaviour, intense and difficult to control emotions, relationship instability and identity distress. The clinic focuses on establishing a positive outlook on the mental health problems, exploring and working on factors that led to the recent crisis (where relevant), developing a crisis plan, establishing goals, activating and educating supports, and linking with other services/referral for ongoing therapy as desired. Diagnosis of borderline personality disorder can be explored in this clinic.
2. A **Randomised Control Trial of a Stepped Care Skills Group Program** with comparison to typical community based treatment for people with **Borderline Personality Disorder**. Following diagnostic assessment, eligible participants are randomly allocated into one of two groups:
  - i. Skills Group Program - 12-week DBT skills group, followed by an optional 16-week DBT skills group for those who would benefit from longer term treatment.
  - ii. Treatment As Usual - referral for community-based psychological treatment and/or other services as needed. Participants are then offered the skills group at the end of the trial period.

The Gold Card Clinic and Skills Group Program are held at the Illawarra Community Mental Health Service, 1 Atchison St Wollongong.

Referrals for the Gold Card Clinic and Skills Group Program can be made via the **Mental Health Line** on **1800 011 511** – request '**Gold Card Clinic**' or '**DBT group**' in the '**Illawarra**' region.

For referrals within the public mental health service, please call the service directly on 4254-1500.

For further information about the research study, please call 4254-1500 and request the DBT coordinator, Adam Finch, or email to [Adam.Finch@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Adam.Finch@health.nsw.gov.au)