



SCIENCE AND
INDUSTRY
ENDOWMENT
FUND



PENRITH
CITY COUNCIL

STEM Community Partnerships Program

Penrith local scenario

Mental Health

According to the World Health Organisation, mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to contribute to his or her community. The social and emotional well-being of individuals and communities is influenced by social and economic conditions i.e. physical environment, available health services, education, housing, transport and employment.

Penrith is home to 194,134 people, of which 13.3% report high or very high psychological distress. Nearly half of all Australians will experience mental illness at some point in their lives.¹ There are a range of mental health conditions including depression, anxiety, eating disorders, traumatic stress disorder, bipolar affective disorder, schizophrenia and other psychotic illnesses.

To maintain good mental health, it is helpful to be part of the community, have social connections and strong personal relationships. The Penrith local government area has a number of services available to support local residents. For example, Like Mind provides a range of community and health services for adults experiencing mental health concerns, as well as their families and carers.

Technology is also playing a role in transforming mental health, ranging from providing tools to help people manage their well-being and more ways to access support services, to enabling researchers to use data to increase understanding of mental well-being.

How your Council tackles the complexity of this issue impacts you and your community, now and in the future.



Your task

Your task is to use the information above and resources provided below as a start to identify a local problem and design a STEM-focused solution.

(Question, Design, Explore, Communicate)

Resources

¹<https://nswmentalhealthcommission.com.au/sites/default/files/publication-documents/Physical%20health%20and%20wellbeing%20-%20final%208%20Apr%202016%20WEB.pdf>

CSIRO research

- Tracking the mental health of the nation <https://data61.csiro.au/en/Our-Research/Our-Work/Health-and-Communities/Social-media-for-mental-health/We-Feel>
- Computer game to assist clinicians in diagnosing mental health disorders <https://www.csiro.au/en/news/news-releases/2019/computer-game-mental-health>

Reports

- Like Mind Penrith – mental health service <http://likemind.org.au/penrith/>
- Neami Nepean-Penrith – mental health service in Penrith <https://www.neaminational.org.au/find-services/neami-nepean-penrith/>
- Mental Health Navigation Tool – Penrith <https://www.mentalhealthhelp.com.au/service-directory/community-mental-health/>
- NSW Government Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District – Mental Health Information <https://www.nbmlhd.health.nsw.gov.au/mental-health>

Articles and other resources

- Mental Health Reform fact sheet <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/reform/Pages/mhr-factsheets.aspx>
- Beyond Blue Mental Health Facts <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/what-is-mental-health>
- Mental Health and Wellbeing <https://www.nsw.gov.au/services/services-by-topic/health-and-wellbeing/mental-health-and-wellbeing/>
- NSW Department of Education Wellbeing for schools <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/wellbeing>
- <https://www.bluemts.com.au/posts/new-acute-mental-health-service-for-young-people-to-be-built-at-nepean/>
- World Health Organisation – definition of mental health https://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en