



# CREATIVE THERAPIES PILOT

## Albury Wodonga

From July 2025 to June 2027, the Australian Government is piloting new music and art therapy services for people living with mental health conditions and Murray PHN has been commissioned to pilot a new creative therapies service for children and young people in Albury Wodonga.

### Who we talked to in the community and what they said

Murray PHN consulted with community stakeholders from April to June 2025 to understand how to design an accessible creative therapies service that meets the needs of children, young people and their families in the Albury Wodonga community.

<b>Organisations</b>	YES Unlimited – The Hive, STAARTS (Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors), Gateway Health Wodonga, Phoenix Wings Wellness, Albury City Council Youth Services, ASPIRE Support Services, Headspace Wodonga, Wellways Psychosocial Recovery Service - Albury, The ArtSpot, Peerhaven Support Group
<b>Other location visits</b>	Murray Art Museum Albury, Albury Conservatorium of Music, Hyphen – Wodonga Library, The Cube Wodonga, Retro Youth Café, Gateway Island Arts Precinct, Windbreak 496, QE2 park, Purple Chicken
<b>Focus groups and digital survey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six targeted focus groups with a total of 40 participants</li> <li>• 64 respondents to online survey</li> </ul>

### What the community said

<b>Service model</b>	A combination of drop in-groups, closed groups and individual sessions
<b>Location</b>	Central points near buses, walking and bike access. Both NSW and Victorian locations
<b>Referral and eligibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal drop-in and self-referral with no diagnosis needed alongside other referral pathways via GPs, youth services, schools and other health services</li> <li>• Opportunity to receive information and share sensory needs prior to the program</li> </ul>
<b>Spaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spaces where young people already gather that are perceived by young people and their families as safe spaces</li> <li>• Use of existing community, arts and cultural spaces with breakout and outdoor areas, as well as outdoor spaces</li> <li>• Visible displays in support of LGBTQIA+, First Nations and culturally diverse communities</li> </ul>
<b>Times</b>	Flexibility including after hours and weekends

<b>Access</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family and carer/support friendly</li> <li>• First Nations young people would like to have Elders present and meet on country</li> <li>• Consistency of clinicians</li> <li>• Online social media group for creative therapies program to support access and confidence</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purposefully inclusive of neurodivergent people, LGBTQIA+ community and people with a disability</li> </ul>
<b>Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stigma around the terms ‘therapy’, and ‘moderate to severe mental health conditions’. Services could use the words ‘music’, ‘art’, ‘wellbeing’ and ‘health’ to share information</li> <li>• There is a need for clear information about what to expect in the program</li> <li>• It is important for people to understand that they do not need music and art skills to access creative therapy services</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art packs and music equipment made available for home use</li> <li>• Food as part of group programs</li> </ul>
<b>Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local artists</li> <li>• Local youth and children’s services in NSW and Victoria</li> <li>• Community cultural leaders and organisations</li> <li>• The Albury Project and schools</li> </ul>
<b>Place-based considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited access for surrounding small towns</li> <li>• LGBTQIA+ young people do not have access to enough safe spaces</li> <li>• Transport is a significant barrier for many potential participants</li> <li>• Current extreme waitlists/closed waitlists for children to access mental health services</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The perspectives of First Nations communities were not strongly represented in this consultation</li> </ul>

## What’s next – how to access the service and more

Your local provider for the Creative Therapies Pilot is:

### Gateway Health Wodonga

Child and Family Health Program: Music and art therapy programs are available for children and young people up to 18 years of age.

For further information, call Gateway Health Wodonga on 02 6022 8888.

### Further information

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