

Media Release

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Expanding support for young people in need

More Horizon House accommodation and mental health services in 2011

St John of God Health Care will dramatically increase its capacity to support young people in need during 2011 with new, specific accommodation services and a national strategy to promote mental health among people aged 12 to 25.

Giving young people a better start to their adult lives is a key objective of Social Outreach and Advocacy services provided by St John of God Health Care.

The capacity to support young people will be enhanced with two new Horizon Houses set to open in March and a significant expansion of mental health services through new partnerships with youth-focussed organisations such as Headspace.

This ongoing commitment to young people will include:

- **Horizon House Warrnambool** – The fourth Horizon House in Victoria will be opened in March, providing support and care to young people who need a stable home or may otherwise be at risk of homelessness.
- **Horizon House Broome** – Australia's ninth Horizon House will also be opened in March, focussing on accommodation needs and support for indigenous young men in the Kimberly, helping create opportunities to engage in education, training and employment.
- **Youth Mental Health** – Several of our Social Outreach and Advocacy services, including Horizon House, provide counselling or mental health support to young people. Building on social enterprises such as our award-winning partnership with Barwon Youth, we are dedicated to developing additional services with other organisations such as Headspace, in multiple locations across WA and Victoria in 2011.
- **Expanding accommodation support** – In addition to the successes of long-term support through Horizon House in WA, we have identified further gaps in service provision for specific groups in the north and north-eastern suburbs of Perth. Here we are exploring ways in which our expertise can provide genuine benefit for disadvantaged young people in their communities.

“This is going to be a very exciting year in terms of developing services for young people,” said Mike Board, Manager for Youth at St John of God Health Care. “We will receive keys for our new Horizon House locations in Broome and Warrnambool very soon and we expect to have those homes fully staffed with live-in carers in the coming weeks, ready to open their doors to young people.”

“These new houses will be opened in places where a need has been identified for long-term accommodation support and we expect to build on the considerable successes we have had in giving a much brighter outlook to young people who come into our care.

“Partnerships are central to ensuring that our services are a success. In Broome we have appointed a local steering committee for the house including Aboriginal community leaders, government organisations and education establishments, while in Warrnambool we are working closely with Brophy Youth and Barwon Youth. I must thank the many partner organisations that have done so much to help get these projects off the ground.”

Mr Board added: “We are also committed to providing more mental health services to young people across Australia and are currently working on several partnership agreements to expand services provided by established organisations in various communities in WA and Victoria.”

“Our ethos in supporting young people is always to give those experiencing disadvantage a brighter future and that is a long-term commitment through our Social Outreach and Advocacy services.”

ENDS

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NOTES

St John of God Health Care is a leading provider of private hospitals, pathology, and Social Outreach and Advocacy services, throughout Australia, New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific region.

We return all profits to the communities we serve by:

- Updating and expanding technology and facilities
- Expanding existing services and acquiring new services
- Providing Social Outreach and Advocacy services to people experiencing disadvantage

Social Outreach and Advocacy services provide significant care and relief for people experiencing disadvantage throughout Australia, New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific region, particularly in areas where we have identified gaps in current service provisions.

Through Social Outreach and Advocacy, St John of God Health Care utilises its existing expertise and reputation to help people and communities help themselves improve health and wellbeing outcomes wherever possible. Our dedication to ‘early intervention’ means that we aim to address health issues as early as possible in their life cycle with the intention of preventing long-term or chronic health factors.

More information is available at: <http://www.sjog.org.au/outreach>

Horizon House provides long-term housing, care and intensive support to young people aged 16 to 22, who would otherwise be without a permanent home.

The service provides a model of care and support in a family environment, working towards St John of God Health Care's vision for all young people to have the opportunity to live in a caring family environment that fosters respect and responsibility and enables them to grow and develop trusting relationships, and become contributing members of the community.

Horizon House aims to meet the long-term needs of disadvantaged young people and those at risk of being homeless. Providing life skills, education, counselling and socialisation can help break the cycle of homelessness, putting young people on a positive pathway for a fulfilling life.

CHA Partnership Award – As part of our commitment to Social Outreach and Advocacy, St John of God Hospital Geelong's partnership with Barwon Youth was recognised in the Catholic Health Australia's annual awards as winner of the Outreach Healthcare Award.