TheMHS Awards 2016 for Programs and Services – Part B Submission
Orygen, The National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health

1. Additional Description

Orygen The National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health works both nationally and locally to improve the mental health of young people. Our national policy, training and research activities are conducted across Australia, often in partnership. In Victoria, we provide clinical services in the north west and west of Melbourne through the four headspace centres which we operate. Orygen applies an integrated approach to improving outcomes for young people experiencing mental ill-health that includes; workforce development, clinical services innovation and research. We also have a strong focus on Youth Engagement and Participation and involve young people in all areas of our work.

We believe that to reduce the burden of mental ill-health, and the accompanying personal, social and economic impacts, a better approach is needed. Orygen has been influential in leading the world with transformational reform to prioritise the needs of young people experiencing mental ill-health, with a focus on prevention and early intervention.

Research: Orygen operates the world’s largest youth mental health research program and is conducting 40-50 ongoing studies in any year. Our research program currently employs 98 researchers, including eight Professors. Through our clinical-research interface, Orygen focuses on translational research and cutting down the time between the discovery of new interventions and their implementation in clinical practice.

Clinical Services: Orygen was integral to the development and scaling up of the headspace model of youth mental health primary care and were part of the management consortium of headspace between 2006-9. We continue to run four headspace centres in the north and west of Melbourne. These services see 4000 young people a year and focus on the principals of early intervention and innovative care.

Knowledge transfer: Through our Skills & Knowledge activities Orygen works nationally to develop the youth mental health workforce and disseminate the findings of our research and clinical services innovation programs. As a National Centre we have recently developed Australia’s first Youth Mental Health Workforce Strategy and Youth Mental Health Training Framework.

Policy: Orygen operates Australia’s only youth mental health policy think tank, which advises governments and health services on system and service reform to improve mental health outcomes for young people. Our policy advice has been influential in changing government policy and resulted in significant new investment for youth mental health services and programs.

https://orygen.org.au/
2.1 Evidence of a significant contribution to the field of mental health on a local, state or national level

Throughout its history Orygen has played a leading role in shaping not only national, but also international approaches to early intervention for young people with mental ill-health. Innovative clinical models developed at Orygen have been replicated across the world and as The National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health we have a key role in improving the delivery of evidence-based mental health services to young people across the Australia. Below are some examples of the contribution we are making.

**headspace – improving primary mental health care services for young people through research and evaluation**

Orygen led the advocacy prior to the 2004 Federal Election that resulted in the establishment of the Australian Government’s National Youth Mental Health Initiative: headspace. We were part of the consortium that ran headspace from 2006-9 and remain a member of the organisation and collaborate across a range of projects. headspace now has over 80 centres across Australia and is a model that has been replicated internationally in Denmark, and acted as the inspiration for similar models in Ireland and Canada.

Orygen operates the headspace Centre of Excellence, which is responsible for collecting, synthesising, generating, analysing and disseminating research regarding young people aged 12-25 with mental health and substance use issues. The Centre works to support headspace service providers and centres to use evidence in practice and services.

We also run four headspace centres in the north and west of Melbourne and integrate these with our research activities to create a unique clinical-research interface which has been recognised internationally as a best practice model (see STEPS research project below). Our headspace sites provide services to 4000 young people per year.

**National Research Priorities Framework**

Orygen has developed a National Research Priorities Framework in order to identify priorities and objectives consistent with enabling Australian youth mental health research to address a number of goals aimed at better understanding and treating young people experiencing mental ill-health. The goals of the National Research Framework align with national policy directions and service system priorities while leveraging Australia’s unique national youth mental health service system through large-scale studies that are now possible for the first time ever in the youth mental health field.

The Framework has identified research priority areas as well as exploring the development of appropriate infrastructure to support a collaborative, well-networked research workforce. The Framework has been developed thorough
research and consultation, data gathering and analysis and the generation of priorities for the youth mental health research community.

**National Youth Mental Health Workforce Strategy and National Training Framework**

As part of our role as The National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health Orygen has developed Australia’s first National Youth Mental Health Workforce Strategy and a National Training Framework to provide a roadmap on how we improve mental health services for young people through more effective training and professional development opportunities for those providing services.

**National Training Delivery**

Orygen is committed to sharing its expertise and resources with mental health care workers around the country. In order to make it easier for those working in youth mental health to access the latest knowledge we developed Orygen Campus ([https://orygen.org.au/Campus](https://orygen.org.au/Campus)) an online hub where youth mental health workers can access the latest resources and training opportunities. In order to improve access for those who work in regional and remote areas, we are offering more online training opportunities through our Learning Management System and webinar platform.

**Brief Interventions in Youth Mental Health Toolkit**

A recent example of our contribution to mental health services is the development of the Brief Intervention in Youth Mental Health Toolkit ([https://orygen.org.au/biymh](https://orygen.org.au/biymh)). In response to the challenges and opportunities of meeting the needs of young people presenting with mental health problems we developed a free comprehensive toolkit for use in headspace centres. The toolkit includes eight brief, evidenced-based clinical interventions for mental health workers as a means of providing appropriate and readily available treatment and care to those young people with mild-to-moderate mental health difficulties.

The toolkit is accompanied by six videos which provide practical tips and guides to support its use. Timely access to care is a priority area for headspace and the evidence suggests that using this toolkit can help young people avoid the need for intensive, longer-term treatment and enjoy better mental health.

**Australian Early Psychosis Research Network**

In 2015, Orygen established the Australian Early Psychosis Research Network, which aims to increase collaboration amongst leading researchers working in Early Psychosis across the country with the ultimate goal of fostering 'substantial improvement in health and social outcomes for people living with psychosis.'
In August 2015, Professor Patrick McGorry AO, Executive Director of Orygen, wrote on behalf of the network in the Medical Journal of Australia outlining the goals of the Network and steps to achieving it.

“The ultimate goal of the Australian Early Psychosis Research Network is substantial improvement in health and social outcomes for people living with psychosis. We have an opportunity to develop a new culture in mental health that has the capacity for large-scale clinical trials with embedded biomarker research, on a par with what exists elsewhere in medicine. Federal government reform and investment gives Australia a unique competitive advantage in this. We do not intend to let this opportunity pass.”

2.2 Evidence of innovation and/or recognised best practice

Orygen is committed to the development of innovative practice in youth mental health and we are equally committed to ensuring that these innovations have a strong evidence base to support them.

_Individual Placement and Support in Youth Mental Health_

An example of Orygen’s innovative work and our commitment to translating new innovations to practice is Individual Placement and Support (IPS) for young people with mental ill-health.

Professor Eóin Killackey leads the area of Functional Recovery Research at Orygen which focuses on improving education, employment, physical health and accommodation outcomes for young people. His team has conducted significant research into the use of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) services for young people with an experience of mental ill-health and developed a model which has been shown to be able support in excess of 85 per cent of young people engaged to get back to work, education and training.

His work formed the basis of Orygen’s _Tell Them They’re Dreaming_ report on Work, Education and Young People with Mental Illness in Australia. This report made a strong recommendation for IPS services as an effective and cost-effective way to return young people with an experience of mental ill-health to work or study and ensure less of these young people require the Disability Support Pension.

In the 2015 Federal Budget Orygen welcomed the commitment of $330 million to improve employment outcomes for young Australians. In particular we supported the targeted funding of $19.4 million over four years to fund a trial of IPS for young people with a lived experience of mental ill-health. Orygen’s strong advocacy in support of this innovation was crucial to the investment in a trial of the model.
EPPIC

A further example of an innovation developed at Orygen that has had both national and international impact is the Early Psychosis Prevention and Intervention Centre (EPPIC).

EPPIC is an integrated, holistic model of care for young people experiencing a first episode of psychosis, aimed at intervening early to divert the course of illness and achieve better outcomes. The research which underpins this model began at the Orygen site in 1984 and was refined over three decades and developed into an early intervention approach which changed the global thinking about mental illness in young people and laid the foundations for the field of youth mental health.

Without specialised services like EPPIC, there can be a long delay before a young person manages to access appropriate treatment and during this time, problems can intensify. These delays can be very damaging to a young person experiencing a psychotic illness because their maturation is often put on hold, their social and family relationships are strained or severed and their vocational prospects are derailed. Secondary problems such as substance abuse, unemployment and behavioural problems may develop or intensify and the illness itself may become more deeply entrenched.

Early psychosis services based on the EPPIC innovation have been scaled up in countries across the world with significant investments in Europe, North America and Asia.

In the 2011 Federal Budget the Australian Government recognised the extensive evidence base and enormous potential of the EPPIC model to deliver better outcomes for young people with psychosis and invested $247m to rollout these services nationally. Orygen has been working in partnership with headspace to deliver these innovative early psychosis services across the country.

STEPS research project

Orygen operates a clinical-research interface which has been internationally recognised as a best practice example in youth mental health.

In 2014 the world’s largest mental health research organisation, The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in the United States, provided Orygen with $6.6 million (USD) to work in partnership on a ground-breaking new research study into treatment strategies for young people at risk of developing a serious mental illness.

The NIMH rarely awards such grants to entities outside of the US, however in this instance made the recommendation that Orygen is the only place in the world that has a youth mental health clinical-research infrastructure capable of
conducting this research.

This study is building on the world-leading research conducted at Orygen into the ‘clinical high risk state’, a classification that has been shown to reliably predict the onset of psychosis in young people. This study aims to establish better ways to identify young people who are at risk of developing any serious mental illness and how best to treat them before their illness becomes established. It is the first large-scale investigation to blend basic biological and clinical research in one study for young people.

These are just a small sample of the significant and innovative work that Orygen has been doing at a local, national and international level.

2.3 Evidence of participation of mental health consumers in the planning, implementation and evaluation

Youth Engagement and Participation Strategy

Orygen has had a strong history of youth participation and engagement. Through our history we have designed innovative approaches to youth engagement, such as the Platform Team, a group of young people who advise the Orygen Youth Health Clinical Program on ways to deliver more youth-friendly and effective services, and our highly regarded model of Youth Peer Support. Much of our early work influenced how other youth mental health organisations approached youth participation and engagement.

When the National Centre was established in 2014 we recognised that we needed a new comprehensive framework for how we partner with young people, families, and the community to improve young people’s mental health. To ensure that young people were genuine partners, the organisation developed a comprehensive Youth Engagement and Participation Strategy. The Strategy requires an organisation-wide commitment to working in partnership with young people and sets the expectation that young people will be meaningfully engaged in activities across Orygen’s programs and divisions.

The strategy has led to the establishment of two key groups of young people that inform Orygen’s work.

Youth Advisory Council: The Youth Advisory Council is charged with providing strategic advice to the Orygen Board of Directors, the Orygen Executive and the Youth Engagement and Participation Program. The council is made up of young people selected through an open application process advertised nationally. The council meets in person four times a year (and is engaged between these meetings through an online platform) with the specific task to advise Orygen on the progress of its implementation of the strategy to review different components of the program and their outcomes. The council meetings coincide with both Orygen Executive and Board meetings to ensure input can occur at that level.

https://orygen.org.au/About/Our-People/Youth-Advisory-Council
**Youth Research Council:** The Youth Research Council consists of young people primarily with a lived experience of mental ill-health but also has a capacity to include those who may be junior researchers about to embark on a research career. The Youth Research Council is charged with the responsibility of providing strategic advice and support to research staff and Research Cabinet at Orygen as they commence their research projects. This involves young people actively contributing to the discussions around areas of research, development of the research question(s), recruitment strategies, design and development of research measures and creative ways to disseminate research findings.

https://orygen.org.au/About/Our-People/Youth-Research-Council

**2.4 Evidence of Partnerships and Linkages (collaboration for continuity between organisations)**

A key part of the approach of the National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health is to work in partnership with agencies across the country to deliver better outcomes for young people will mental ill-health. Below is a summary of some of our key partnerships and the areas in which we collaborate.

**Australia**

- headspace: A range of clinical trials and NHMRC evaluation research
- Young and Well CRC: e-health and online interventions
- The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health: Biological and genetic research
- Deakin University: Health economics and clinical trials
- Australian Catholic University: Online interventions and relapse prevention
- University of Melbourne: Operation of the Centre for Youth Mental Health
- Neuropsychiatry Centre: University of Melbourne: Clinical imaging research
- Monash University: Biomedical imaging research
- Australian Early Psychosis Research Network: Established and host this collaborative research group
- Black Dog Institute: NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Suicide Prevention
- National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre, University of New South Wales: Policy development and comorbidity research
- Brain and Mind Centre, University of Sydney: Clinical trials and NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence
- National Eating Disorders Collaboration: Biological data analysis
- Telethon Kids Institute: Early psychosis research
- Lifeline Australia Alice Springs: Suicide prevention
- University of Adelaide: Biological data analysis and trial development
• Queensland Brain Institute, University of Queensland: Early psychosis research

International

In 2015 Orygen had in excess of 100 international partnerships and collaborations in 19 countries. We also host the secretariat of two international organisations: The International Association for Youth Mental Health and the International Early Psychosis Association.

2.5 Verification and evaluation of the program’s effectiveness

As a research organisation evaluation and verification are at the heart of all our work at Orygen. We pride ourselves on developing strong evidence-bases for our clinical innovations and making significant contributions to the global youth mental health literature.

The below graphs indicate the growth in our research output in peer-reviewed sources since the establishment of Orygen and our steady increase in citations per year.

![Graphs showing growth in publications and citations per year](source: Web of Science)

Programs within our organisation and key members of our staff have been awarded an impressive list of honours for the excellence of their work. Of particular note last year were three major awards given to Orygen staff members from the Brain & Behaviour Research Foundation in the USA. This was the first time this prestigious foundation had granted any award to an
Australian researcher and three of their five major award categories were given to researchers who work at Orygen.

Recent awards:

2015

Professor Patrick McGorry AO (Executive Director, Orygen)
- Lieber Prize for Schizophrenia Research (Brain & Behaviour Research Foundation, USA)
- The Dublin Prize

Associate Professor Mario Alvarez-Jimenez (Head, Online Interventions and Innovation Research)
- NHMRC Research Excellence Award 2015 (Clinical)

Dr Simon Rice (Research Fellow)
- Society for Mental Health Research Early Career Research Award

Gina Chinnery (National Vocational Services Manager)
- Employment Officer of the Year (Australian Long-Term Unemployment Conference)
- Career Development Association of Australia Practitioner of the Year

Professor Helen Herrman (Director)
- Exceptional Contribution Award (TheMHS Learning Network Conference)

Dr Magenta Simmons (Youth Partnerships in Research Coordinator)
- Early Career Research in Mental Health Award for Excellence (TheMHS Learning Network Conference)

Professor Michael Berk (Professorial Research Fellow)
- Colvin Prize for Outstanding Achievement in Mood Disorders Research (Brain & Behaviour Research Foundation, USA)

Associate Professor Barnaby Nelson (Head, Ultra High Risk for Psychosis Research)
- Sidney R. Baer Jr. Prize for Achievement in Schizophrenia Research (Brain & Behaviour Research Foundation, USA)

2014

Dr Jo Robinson (Head, Suicide Prevention Research)
- Excellence in Suicide Prevention 2014 (LiFE Award – Suicide Prevention Australia)

Professor Helen Herrman
• First Australian to be elected President of the World Psychiatric Association

2013

Professor Helen Herrman
• Victorian Honour Roll of Women

Professor Patrick McGorry
• National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI, USA) Scientific Research Award

Professor Andrew Chanen
• Elected President of the International Society for the Study of Personality Disorders

2010

Professor Patrick McGorry
• Australian of the Year
• Victorian Government Minister of Health’s Award for Outstanding Achievement in Mental Health

Professor Andrew Chanen
• Gold Award Winner for HYPE Program – Best specialist mental health service (Australian and New Zealand Mental Health Service Achievement Awards)

2009

Professor Patrick McGorry
• The Melbourne Award
• Castilla Del Pino Award (Spain) for contribution to psychiatry in Spanish-speaking countries
3. Conclusion

Orygen’s work has been essential to shaping the global understanding of mental ill-health in young people and promoting the principals of early intervention for these illnesses. The research program at Orygen, which is the world’s largest focused on youth mental health, has developed innovations in clinical care which have been replicated across Australia and around the world. Our championing of stigma-free primary mental health platforms for young people led to the establishment of headspace, the most significant reform in mental health services for young people in Australian history.

Orygen continues to operate four headspace centres and combined with the Orygen Youth Health Clinical Program service based at Parkville, these services see 4700 young people a year in the north and west of Melbourne.

As The National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health, we now have a mandate to support youth mental health workers across the country by giving them access to the latest skills and knowledge. We have developed innovative online training packages to better equip mental health workers to deliver best practice interventions to young people.

Underpinning all of our work is the belief that young people are the experts in what they are experiences and through our Youth Engagement and Participation Strategy we are ensuring that young people and their families are true partners in our work and play an active role in all aspects of its development and implementation.

4. Referees

Removed for privacy
Appendix of Support Material

FIGURE 1: Orygen’s integrated approach

FIGURE 2: Orygen’s growth in funding
FIGURE 3: Major activities

7 Professors

4000+ young people treated per year

200+ publications per year

50 ongoing youth mental health research projects

Orygen Policy Think Tank

Developing Australia’s National Research Priorities Framework

Host the Australian Early Psychosis Research Network

Host the International Association for Youth Mental Health and International Early Psychosis Association

FIGURE 4: Major training activities

100+ visitors to Orygen per year

Published 24 clinical manuals in the last 2 years

5000+ youth mental health workers trained per year

Deliver Graduate Education up to Masters level

Developed Australia’s Youth Mental Health Training Framework

Developed an Online Learning Environment for youth mental health workers

Developed Australia’s Youth Mental Health Workforce Strategy
FIGURE 7: Media coverage of release of recent policy paper on self-harm

Catherine Armitage
Senior Writer
View more articles from Catherine Armitage
Follow Catherine on Twitter Follow Catherine on Google+ Email Catherine

Medical services response to self-harm patients 'negative and damaging': Orygen report

March 15, 2016

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The self-harm scourge: When something bad happened, I would think ...
The silent plea for help

Most popular
1. Why you shouldn't work

FIGURE 8: Media coverage of novel psychosis treatment trial

Fish oil shows promise in preventing psychosis

Marc Llewellyn
ABC

Monday, 17 November 2014

Seven years after the end of a trial in which young people at severe risk of developing psychotic disorders were given fish oil tablets, most remain mentally healthy, a new study has found.

The study, presented today at the International Early Psychosis Conference in Japan, lends weight to the theory that concentrated fish oil, which contains omega-3 fatty acids, may help prevent the development of psychosis.

But more evidence is needed to confirm the results, say the international team of researchers including Professors Patrick McGorry and Paul Angermeyer of the Orygen Youth Health Research Centre at the University of Melbourne.

*If it's true that omega-3 fatty acids prevent the onset of the likes of schizophrenia and psychosis, and the results are consistent with this belief, then it could be valuable
2016 Orygen Summer Interns reflect on the program

Over the last four weeks we’ve had the pleasure of working alongside Deoney, Anthony, Jay and Kendall, four incredible young people who took part in our first Summer Intern Program. We want to thank them for all the talent, enthusiasm and fantastic ideas they contributed to the organisation during their time here. As a parting gift they’ve left us with this video they made to reflect on their experiences. We think it’s pretty brilliant!
Orygen researchers amongst World’s Most Influential Scientific Minds

Thomson Reuters have published their 2015 list of the World’s Most Influential Scientific Minds and Orygen is proud to have a number of researchers connected with our work represented.

Our Executive Director, Professor Patrick McGorry AO and Professor Michael Berk, who is involved in Mood Disorders research at Orygen, were both honoured in the list, which included over 100 Australian researchers.

Also featured in the Most Cited Researchers in the Psychiatry/Psychology category were Professor Christos Pantelis, Professor Alison Yung, Professor Murat Yucel and Associate Professor Lisa Phillips, all of whom have been based at Orygen, or collaborated with our work.

FIGURE 12: Victorian Government committed to fund capital redevelopment of Orygen Parkville site

LABOR WILL FUND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH – FROM THE GROUND UP

An Andrews Labor Government will invest $60 million to completely rebuild the world’s largest international research institute for youth mental health, which is on the brink of falling down and taking our reputation with it.

Orygen Youth Health’s Parkville facility is at the heart of Victoria’s status as a world leader in mental health, but inside century-old buildings, walls are crumbling, roofs are rotting and experts are working out of converted garages.

Opposition Leader, Daniel Andrews, joined Orygen’s Executive Director and Australian of the Year 2010, Professor Patrick McGorry AO, to secure a future for the centre, protect our international reputation and save more lives.
STOP THE MADNESS

There's a miraculous new treatment for schizophrenia that could transform the way we treat mental illness. And then there are the terrible reasons why most medical professionals have never heard of it.

BY JONATHAN COHN
ART BY GLEN BROWN.
FIGURE 14: Feedback from young people on Orygen services

“Everything they’ve done for me has built my confidence, it’s made me realised I want this and that I can do this.”
Client who found employment through vocational recovery service

“Without my case manager and my GP I would never have made it through such a difficult time and I could never thank them enough.”
Client of Orygen Clinical Program

“Unbelievably helpful! Seeing Werribee headspace has saved my life – the staff are beyond kind and caring and friendly.”
Client of headspace Werribee

FIGURE 15: Brief history of Orygen

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>First Episode Psychosis research unit at Royal Park Hospital</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>EPPIC is founded</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Centre for Young People’s Mental Health established</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>National Early Psychosis Project established</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Orygen Youth Health established</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Headspace founded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>EPPIC expands nationally with new centres in each State and Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Orygen, The National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health established</td>
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