

PRESS RELEASE

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Calm Minds Launches “My Mind Matters” A first of its kind Mental Health Platform To Provide a Single Destination For Those Seeking Information and Advice About Mental Health.

My Mind Matters provides search links to professional help, highlighting the resources that are available in an easy to use and consumable format, and information on how and why to seek help for mental health.

PERTH, WA, April 2021: Calm Minds today launched **My Mind Matters** (<https://blmccavanagh.github.io/My-Mind-Matters/>), a free, interactive platform developed to assist individuals that may be reluctant to seek information about or assistance for mental health issues.

“Having worked in the health industry for over 5 years, I have witnessed first hand the reluctancy many people have to seek help and information relating to mental health, “ said Bridget McCavanagh, co-founder of **Calm Minds**. “This website is designed to make this process more manageable, by providing a platform that involves a quick and easy to complete questionnaire that then best matches their mental health screening results to valuable resources and qualified professionals in their area.”

The Black Dog Institute - the only medical research institute in Australia to investigate mental health across the lifespan - says “One in five (20%) of Australians aged 16-85 experience a mental illness in any year.” Despite so many people experiencing mental health illness, 54% of those will **not** access any treatment [1].

Almost half (45%) of all Australians will experience a mental health illness in their lifetime [2];

My Mind Matters helps to meet the needs of these people by providing:

- A link to complete the Kessler 10 questionnaire, a nationally recognised resource for measuring non specific psychological distress, which is typically used as the first screening instrument by health professionals to measure general distress without identifying its cause [3]. My Mind Matters allows users to complete the questionnaire in the comfort of their own home, at a time of their own choosing without the added pressure of being with a GP or other health professional.
- Contact information for health professionals in the user’s area.
- Reading and viewing resources relating directly to differing mental health issues.

To develop **My Mind Matters**, **Calm Minds** researched the current platforms and methods that many Australians are forced to undertake when trying to identify resources to assist them with

addressing their mental health concerns, finding the process needlessly complex, with frequently conflicting information and overwhelming the user when they may already be distressed or impacted with mental health issues.

Among key insights:

- Primary mental health care services are central in addressing signs of mental illness, with appropriate treatment providing both immediate and long term positive outcomes [4].
- The statistics of those not seeking help for mental health illnesses are worsened by delayed treatment due to serious problems in detection and accurate diagnosis for those suffering from mental health illnesses [1].
- The proportion of people with mental illness accessing treatment is half that of people with physical disorders [5].

My Mind Matters is designed to reduce the time it takes a person to research into and get help or advice about mental health, and provide an easy-to-navigate user experience that links information associated with mental health to individualised recommendations relating to the type of help they are able to seek, and professional contacts in the field of health and mental health. Combined with the K10 questionnaire [6] that gives the user a result relating to their current state of general distress and recommended next steps, there is a search form that allows the user to select what type of service they are searching for (GP, psychologist, psychiatrist etc.) within their area by entering their postcode. There are also links to recommended reading and video links, categorised by related mental health issues and illnesses.

These functions will be running and available in the first release of **My Mind Matters**. In future developments we plan to add information on the different types of services health professionals offer, government initiatives and financial help that is available, treatment options and medications, and information about different mental health illnesses.

Links:

More information about mental health in Australia: <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au>

About Calm Minds:

Calm Minds is comprised of two UWA students currently studying web development, with a vision to help remove the stigma associated with mental health.

If you are feeling suicidal contact Lifeline's 24 hour crisis support service on 13 11 14 or seek immediate help from a GP, psychiatrist or a psychologist.

1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2014). Australia's Health 2014. AIHW: Canberra.

2. Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2009). National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing: Summary of Results, 4326.0, 2007. ABS: Canberra.

3. DACAS. The Kessler 10 - Information for health professionals. (2021)
4. Department of Health and Ageing. (2013). National Mental Health Report 2013: tracking progress of mental health reform in Australia 1993 – 2011. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.
5. Commonwealth of Australia. (2010). National Mental Health Report 2010. Canberra, Australia.

6. Kessler, R.C., Barker, P.R., Colpe, L.J., Epstein, J.F., Gfroerer, J.C., Hiripi, E., Howes, M.J., Normand, S.-L.T., Manderscheid, R.W., Walters, E.E., and Zaslavsky, A.M., Screening for serious mental illness in the general population. Archives of General Psychiatry, 2003. 60(2): p. 184-189.