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Young People with Mental Illness Given Time Out

The Queensland Alliance; Youth and Family Service (YFS) Logan; and a collaborative of four community organisations in Cairns led by Aftercare; welcome today's \$6.4M announcement that the Queensland Government will fund two 'Time Out' houses for young people with mental illness.

CEO of the Queensland Alliance, Mr Jeff Cheverton, said this was a visionary investment in the future of Queensland's mental health system.

"This initiative demonstrates the Queensland Government has listened - Time Out Houses will eventually pay for themselves, providing young people under 25 with somewhere safe, friendly and welcoming to go when they first experience mental illness, preventing hospitalisation and an often traumatic experience for families," Mr Cheverton said.

The service will be provided in Logan by YFS Logan in partnership with their local division of general practice (South East Primary Health Care Network). It will also be provided in Cairns by a collaborative of Centacare Cairns; youthlink; Far North Queensland Division of General Practice; and Aftercare.

YFS CEO, Cath Bartolo, said, "It's great to be able to work on and evaluate an innovative project concerning early intervention, and develop the concept as it continues to evolve and meet the needs of young people and their families."

Over the next three years, the Time Out House initiative will support over 250 Queenslanders aged between 18 and 25 with both services staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by two support workers.

Aftercare Executive Director, John Malone said, "Outreach workers will be available to support people for up to three months after they leave the program- this is an important ongoing service aimed at sustaining young people's health and wellbeing."

Mr Cheverton said the Queensland Government was investing in early intervention in a 'far-sighted' initiative.

"Mental health services in Queensland have traditionally focused on the acutely unwell, offering hospital-based care with some case management follow up post-discharge," he said.

"Overseas people with mental illness are being treated in services that are smaller, welcoming, friendly and safe – more like backpacker style accommodation than clinical services. This has resulted in cost-savings and better health outcomes. It's great to see this innovation established in Queensland."



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