



Media Alert: 18 November 2019

Launch Of New Health Service At Dubbo: Free Perinatal Mental Health Support For New Parents

Expectant and new parents experiencing perinatal depression and anxiety (PNDA) can now access GP-referred, free psychological counselling sessions at **Gidget House Dubbo**, which will officially open at the Tresillian in Western Family Care Centre, 214 Darling Street, Dubbo, on Tuesday 26 November 2019 at 10.15am.

The new Gidget House, which offers free counselling services by appointment, and employs local psychologists, will be opened by Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional NSW, Industry & Trade, **the Hon John Barilaro MP**, and Minister for Mental Health, Women and Regional Youth, **the Hon. Bronnie Taylor MLC**.

Gidget House Dubbo joins its NSW regional sister-services, Coffs Harbour and Queanbeyan, with other services located in North Sydney, Merrylands, Karitane at Randwick, The Mater Hospital at North Sydney and North Shore Private Hospital at St Leonards. The Foundation's first Queensland service will launch next year in Toowoomba.

NSW Deputy Premier and Member for Monaro the Hon. John Barilaro MP said that Gidget House is a wonderful and valuable service for local families in Dubbo and surrounds. "As a father of three daughters, I know first-hand how important it is to have access to a place like Gidget House for new parents and young families," Mr Barilaro said.

"Everyone's parenting journey is different, but it is critical that young mums and dads have access to help when they need it. That is why the NSW Government has backed Gidget Foundation Australia with significant funding and I want to thank and congratulate the Foundation on the amazing work they do," he said.

Minister for Mental Health & Women, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor MLC, said there can be no doubt that babies are a blessing, but when a baby arrives it can also be one of the most challenging times in a mother's life.

"Sometimes we can forget that it can be a stressful, lonely and overwhelming time caring for a newborn. I acknowledge the wonderful staff from the Gidget centres; they are passionate about helping families in their hour of need and I commend the Gidget Foundation Australia for the work they do," she said.

Pregnancy brings joy along with challenges. Gidget Foundation Australia and Tresillian recognise the importance of emotional wellbeing for new parents, and the need to provide them with support and services.

Robert Mills, CEO of Tresillian, said "This program perfectly complements the work of our specialist staff at the Tresillian in Western Family Care Centre. The service, which operates through a partnership with Western NSW Local Health District, assists parents with their baby or toddler when experiencing early parenting difficulties such as an unsettled baby, breastfeeding, toddler behaviour challenges and feeling

overwhelmed and exhausted. The presence of a Gidget psychologist will deliver practical help and support to parents living in the Dubbo community and its surrounds and, as a free service, will be available to all families, regardless of income”.

“With many families in the region affected by drought, Tresillian is thrilled to be partnering with the Gidget Foundation – with whom we’ve had a long-standing 20 year partnership - on this initiative, providing much needed psychology services in the context of care they receive at the Tresillian in Western Family Care Centre,” he said.

Gidget Foundation Australia CEO, Arabella Gibson, said, “Speaking about mental health issues remains really difficult among those living in regional and rural communities and hopefully Gidget House can help to break the stigma, particularly with our psychologists who have local understanding. As a free service, it’s also going to help families who would otherwise struggle to pay for specialist psychological counselling.”

Ms Gibson said the partnership with Tresillian is a wonderful collaboration. “We are delighted to team up with Tresillian to provide comprehensive psychological counselling for new parents here in Dubbo. The services on offer here will mean that so many more mums and dads will have the support they need during this vulnerable and often isolating time in their parenting journey,” she said.

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Previously known as postnatal depression, perinatal anxiety and depression during pregnancy and early parenthood (the perinatal period) affects almost 100,000 Australians each year, equating to 1 in 5 new mums and 1 in 10 new dads. Gidget is the nickname of a vibrant young mother from Sydney who took her own life while suffering from unrecognised postnatal depression. She hid her suffering even from her loving family and friends. They created the Gidget Foundation, determined that what happened to Gidget would not happen to others.

Today, Gidget Foundation Australia assists thousands of expectant parents and their families each year and provides psychological services to [parents in need](#) through its [Gidget House](#) face-to-face services (at an expanding number of locations), its [Start Talking](#) telehealth program and Emotional Wellbeing antenatal screening programs conducted through participating hospitals.

Gidget Foundation Australia is a not for profit organisation, supported by the community, the corporate sector, the medical profession, the NSW and Commonwealth Governments, and the media.

For further information, interviews or images:

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LAUNCH DETAILS:

Date: Tuesday 26 November 2019 | Time: 10.15am

Venue: Tresillian in Western Family Care Centre, 214 Darling Street, Dubbo