



mindgardens
Neuroscience Network

Our Background and Why We are Different

THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

Almost half (45%) of Australians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime. One in five (20%) Australians aged 16-85 experience a mental illness in any year. Of the 20% of Australians with a mental illness in any one year, 11.5% have one disorder and 8.5% have two or more disorders. (Black Dog Institute, 2020).

Nearly one-third of the non-fatal burden of disease in Australia in 2018 was caused by mental health and substance use disorders (24%) and neurological conditions (7.9%) (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2021). In addition, there is evidence that neurological, mental health and substance use disorders rarely exist in isolation. Comorbidities increase disease burden costs and effects the course an illness takes, including the services an individual will require.

In 2018-19 the direct economic costs of mental ill-health and suicide in Australia were estimated at \$43–70 billion. These estimates include direct expenditure on healthcare and other supports and services (\$16 billion); lower economic participation and lost productivity (\$12–39 billion); and informal care provided by family and friends (\$15 billion). **The cost of disability and premature death due to mental ill-health, suicide and self-inflicted injury is equivalent to a further \$151 billion** (Productivity Commission, Mental Health, Inquiry Report, 2020).

MINDGARDENS; NEEDED NOW MORE THAN EVER

In the past two years of COVID-19, Australians have also experienced the challenges of isolation, as well as demonstrably increased levels of stress, anxiety and depression. In a recent report on the impact of the pandemic to May 2021 (AIHW 2021), **the proportion of young people experiencing severe psychological distress increased by 16% compared to pre-pandemic levels.** There was also a steady rise in the number of mental health services across the community subsidised by Medicare between mid-March and mid-December 2020, which likely reflects increased need and increased availability of services during this period.

Slow progress in finding new treatments for many mental health and neurological disorders, poor translation of research outcomes into practice, ineffective implementation of the best models of care, and a lack of integration across hospitals, community care, primary health practitioners and policy makers, all contribute to an overall growth in the burden of disease. This has an enormous negative impact on patients, families, the community, health costs and lost national productivity. **Finding effective solutions to these complex issues and challenges requires bold thinking: a reimagining of the way in which we coordinate and integrate efforts and investments across research, clinical care, and the education of the next generation of clinicians and health professionals.**

THE MINDGARDENS JOURNEY

Located in the Randwick Health and Innovation Precinct (Precinct), the founding members of Mindgardens are:

- The Black Dog Institute
- Neuroscience Research Australia
- South Eastern Sydney Local Health District
- University of New South Wales

Mindgardens has built considerable momentum and is already demonstrating impact. Since 2018, Mindgardens has been successful in attracting over \$11.5 million in federal and state grants and \$6.5 million in donations to support its first phase of development. This funding has resulted in the establishment of new clinical research services for the treatment of conditions such as psychosis and neurological disorders. Furthermore, innovative models of care such as Mindgardens specialist clinics for patients with complex and acute needs (e.g. for depression), community hubs (to improve the interface between physical health and mental health, as well as alternatives to emergency departments) and digital technologies for prevention and outreach supports personalised and seamless care.

A VISION TO TRANSFORM THE LANDSCAPE

The comprehensive cancer model has proven the impact of continuity of care connected with world-class research, to mutually leverage all forms of research and treatment innovation. Today, this approach is urgently needed to support and care for Australians with mental health, alcohol and drug and neurological disorders.

As highlighted in the Randwick Health and Innovation Precinct Strategy 2021-2024, the Mindgardens Neuroscience Network has been identified as one of the Precinct's flagship initiatives. By leading multi-faceted partnerships built on existing relationships, governance structures, shared systems, and approaches to working together, Mindgardens will be a case study for the broader Innovation Precinct of the benefits and impacts created by strong alliances and transformational collaboration across the Precinct.

Mindgardens is building a multi-disciplinary environment, connecting key service providers, research, advocacy, education/training and strategic stakeholders to bolster translational research strategies and achieve better care and outcomes for patients. Leveraging the strengths of our members, **Mindgardens seeks to develop new innovative ideas, models of care and practice to deliver real and sustainable system-wide change that can be scaled and replicated beyond the local health district.**

Shared member infrastructure will facilitate collaborative clinical, research and education approaches including sharing data systems, clinical trials frameworks, integrated care pathways for people with mental health, drug and alcohol and neurological disorders, and supporting clinicians develop their research skills and expertise. Therefore, patients will have appropriate and integrated access to ongoing high-quality care and be offered the newest and most promising mental health, drug and alcohol neurological disorders treatments through better integration of service delivery, research and education.

The Mindgardens members represent the largest collective of neuroscientists and clinicians in the southern hemisphere. Together, this community of specialist clinicians, researchers, health professionals, practitioners and students form a unique hub of highly concentrated expertise across multiple disciplines relating to mental health, drug and alcohol and neurological disorders.

Mindgardens ambition is to transform the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care and support services for people who experience mental health, drug and alcohol and neurological disorders.

The Mindgardens Neuroscience Network Ltd (Mindgardens) is a company limited by guarantee established in the Randwick Health and Innovation Precinct that brings together the strengths of our member organisations - Black Dog Institute, Neuroscience Research Australia, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, and University of New South Wales



Our Strategic Goals

Mindgardens seeks to be transformative by pursuing three strategic goals which are in alignment with the Precinct's 2021-2024 Strategic Priorities: Clinical and Academic Excellence, Innovation and Collaboration and Global and Local Impact.

1. Drive better outcomes through research and innovation translation

To be recognised as a leader in accelerating translation of evidence from all forms of research, implementation science and innovation into improved patient and community outcomes for identified priority areas in mental health, drug and alcohol and neurological disorders

2. Maximise the impact of collaboration, co-design and partnerships

To deliver best health and wellbeing outcomes for people living with mental health, drug and alcohol and neurological disorders, Mindgardens will drive and optimise effective collaboration with its members; ensure the development of patient centred co-design healthcare services and drive best value from its partnerships

3. Build a learning healthcare ecosystem

To provide the highest quality training, education, awareness building and support systems for clinicians, researchers, health managers, peer workforce and community for developing collective knowledge, skills and capabilities in mental health, drug and alcohol and neurological disorders

KEY INITIATIVES OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS:

Supported by corporate and operational scaffolding needed to enable the effective administration, operations, and growth.

Mindgardens Flagship Initiatives:

Developing and establishing galvanising projects known as the Mindgardens Flagship Initiatives around current health challenges – Dementia, Psychosis and Youth Navigation. Our combined strengths will deliver impact and differentiation, and attract government and philanthropic funding.

Research:

Specialist clinics, community hubs and prevention and outreach projects including data systems

MINDLabs:

Creating MINDLabs which bring together people with lived experience, clinicians, researchers, health managers, and the community in an integrated manner, to create new opportunities for training and building capacity and capabilities around translational research, co-design and co-production including:

- seeding grants
- mechanisms for mentoring
- leveraging SPHERE and Tyree IHealthE

Partnership engagement:

Strengthening and leveraging our existing working relationships with our members and the Precinct, the local and broader community, and building new strategic partnerships including with:

- Sydney Children's Hospitals Network and
- Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network