







Supporting Mental Health and Social Connection in the Community

An overview of programs, services and initiatives delivered, funded or supported by Darebin Council

April 2026





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Supporting Mental Health, Wellbeing and Connection in Darebin

Strong communities are built through connection, belonging and opportunities to participate. Every day, Darebin Council contributes to community wellbeing through the places, spaces, programs and services that bring people together and support active, connected lives.

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) identifies local government as being ideally positioned to foster social connection, inclusion and local networks. MAV highlights the role of council-provided infrastructure and programs in supporting social connection, belonging, mental health and wellbeing (Municipal Association of Victoria [MAV], 2026, pp. 14, 35).

This document highlights the specific programs, services and initiatives delivered or funded by Darebin Council that directly support mental health, wellbeing and social connection. While many Council activities contribute to these outcomes, this mapping focuses on targeted initiatives and will be reviewed and updated annually.

Family Services

Council provides a broad suite of family, maternal health, and youth services that directly support community members experiencing diagnosed or identified mental health challenges. These services operate across Darebin and are delivered in partnership with key state government departments, i.e. Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), Department of Education (DE), Department of Health (DH), health services, and community organisations.

Services and Programs Supporting People with Mental Health Challenges

Maternal and Child Health (MCH) – Universal + Enhanced

- Mental health screening embedded across 13 Maternal Health Centres in Darebin.
- Council employs 3 Enhanced MCH nurses and 1 Family Worker dedicated to higher-needs families.
- Enhanced MCH services include:
    - Home-based outreach for new parents
    - Postnatal depression screening and early identification
    - Support for parents who find it difficult to attend centres due to mental health or family violence issues
    - Referrals to mental health and wellbeing services

Immunisation Outreach

- Conducted by 8 nurses, often in partnership with the Enhanced MCH team.
- Home-visit immunisation support for families unable to attend centres due to:
    - Mental health challenges
    - Family violence
    - Crisis or instability
- Provides gentle engagement and linkage to additional supports.

Integrated Family Services

- Team of 6 social workers (including Team Leader).
- Provides home-based outreach and group programs to families experiencing complex needs, including mental health concerns.
- Key programs and supports:
    - Parenting support and early intervention
    - Tuning into Kids / Tuning into Teens programs to strengthen emotional regulation and parent–child communication

    - Supported playgroups for socially isolated or vulnerable families
    - Ongoing case management and referrals to specialist mental health or family violence services

How Services Are Delivered

- Home visits (Enhanced MCH, Integrated Family Services, Immunisation outreach).
- Centres across Darebin for maternal health appointments, playgroups, and parenting programs.
- Case coordination and cross-agency referrals, ensuring wrap-around support.
- Partnership delivery, partially funded through the Department of Health and DFFH.

Geographic Coverage

- Services operate across all Darebin suburbs.
- Clients are allocated to their closest Maternal Health Centre.
- Outreach teams (Integrated Family Services, Enhanced MCH, immunisation nurses) support families in-home throughout the municipality.

Target Groups

- Families with children aged 0–18
- New parents, particularly those experiencing postnatal mental health concerns
- Families experiencing:
    - Mental health challenges
    - Family violence
    - Substance use issues
    - Homelessness or temporary accommodation
    - Social isolation
- CALD communities and families requiring culturally responsive support

Eligibility and Referral Pathways

- Birth hospitals (standard MCH pathways)
- Self-referral
- GP and primary care providers
- Child Protection
- The Orange Door
- Uniting and other family service organisations
- Immunisation referrals through the Enhanced MCH program or internal pathways

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Children's Services

Council provides a range of services to support children's development, mental health and wellbeing. These services operate across Darebin and are delivered in partnership with key State Government departments including Department of Education (DE) and Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

Supported Playgroups

Supported Playgroups provide families and children space to connect and enjoy a range of fun play opportunities and activities together. Playgroup Facilitators support families to find out about local services and support networks in the community and develop a Family Connection Plan.
Supported Playgroups are free and provide opportunities for parents to develop their parenting skills and confidence to support their child's wellbeing and development in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

How Services Are Delivered

Council employs qualified facilitators to lead ten Supported Playgroups at various locations throughout the City of Darebin.

Target Groups, Eligibility and Referral Pathways

- Families with children aged 0-5
- Eligibility includes one of the following criteria: hold a Health Care Card, identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, have a child in kinship care, or be referred by Child FIRST/Child Protection, the Orange Door, or Enhanced Maternal and Child Health Services

Best Start Program

Best Start is an early years initiative to support families and caregivers to provide the best possible environment, experiences and care for children from birth to school entry.

The program focuses on all Aboriginal children as well as children experiencing vulnerability.

Best Start partnerships use local data and community knowledge to identify those who are experiencing vulnerability. Communities and service providers collaborate to address issues as they are experienced at a neighbourhood or regional level.

Improvement teams focus on boosting children's participation in early childhood programs such as kindergarten, playgroups and maternal and child health (MCH) services. The program also puts in place prevention strategies, such as providing referral pathways when targeted supports are required.

Toy Library

The Darebin Toy Library is a free service for families with children aged 3 months to 6 years to borrow quality toys to enhance their early-learning experiences through play. Toy Library sessions provide an opportunity for families to connect with other families to share experiences, challenges and make new friends.

A Toy Library officer is available at each session. A range of support services and early childhood programs are promoted at the Toy Library. The Toy Library program is supported by volunteers.

Early Years Parenting Programs

A range of early years parenting programs are offered throughout the year. These services offer support, education and the opportunity for families to connect with other families.

Council officers and a range of early childhood professionals support these programs, providing families with an opportunity to connect with other support services.

Youth Services

Darebin Youth Services does not deliver clinical mental health treatment. However, the service plays a significant role in early intervention, prevention, wellbeing support, and safe engagement for young people aged 12–25, including those experiencing mental health challenges (diagnosed or undiagnosed). Programs focus on social connection, identity development, engagement, skill-building and linking young people to external specialist services.

Key Programs and Activities Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing (Indirect)

Universal Drop-In Programs

- Delivered at The Hub and Leamington Street Pavilion (Reservoir)
- Provide safe, supervised spaces for young people to connect, socialise and access informal support.

Targeted Group Programs

- Queer Collective – for LGBTIQA+ young people
- Neurodivergent Group – for neurodiverse young people

- Young Parents Group – for young parents and their children

These groups reduce isolation and strengthen identity and belonging.

Creative and Skill-Building Programs

- Decibels Youth Music and Performing Arts Programs
- All About Art Committee
- Amplify - Creative engagement supporting emotional expression, confidence and personal development.

Outreach and Engagement

- Youth outreach delivered in community spaces, public areas and schools.
- Used to identify emerging needs early and engage young people who are disconnected from supports.

Youth Participation Initiatives

- Examples include the Young Citizens Jury (currently on hold) and youth voice embedded in all aspects of youth programs.

Youth Worker Role and Skillset

Target Groups

Primary cohort is young people aged 12–25, including:

- LGBTIQA+ young people
- Neurodivergent young people
- Young parents
- Socially isolated or disengaged young people
- Young people experiencing disadvantage, marginalisation or complexity

Eligibility & Referral Pathways

- Most programs are low-barrier and do not require referrals.
- Open access/drop-in: self-referral
- Targeted programs: may require light intake or referrals from schools, services or internal teams
- Staff may provide warm referrals to external specialist services (mental health, AOD, housing, family violence).

Partnerships and External Collaboration

Youth Services works closely with external organisations across the primary–tertiary continuum, including:

- Headspace
- Youth Support & Advocacy Service (YSAS)
- Your Community Health
- Schools and local youth agencies
- Collaboration includes:
    - Colocation of services
    - Shared referral pathways
    - Joint programs and activities
    - Coordinated support and service navigation

Regional Networks and Strategic Partnerships

Youth Services is an active member of several networks, including:

- Austin Health Child & Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing Network (CYMHS)
- Middle Years and Transitions Network (MY&T)
- Youth Primary Prevention Network (YPPN)
- Northern Region Youth Services LGA Network

- Northern Region Headspace Consortium
- A major upcoming project: Healthy Masculinity Forum (Term 3), delivered with the Northern LGA network.

Supported and Connected Living

Council delivers a broad range of government-funded in-home and community-based services to eligible clients, alongside Council-funded services and initiatives delivered through the Social and Independent Living Unit for the broader community. Government-funded services support older adults and people with support needs to maintain independence, wellbeing, and social connection. Services are delivered by approximately 120 community support workers to over 3,000 clients across Darebin, with a strong focus on reducing social isolation, supporting mental wellbeing, and strengthening community participation.

Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP services) and the Victorian State Government funded Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP Services)

Social Support and Community Engagement

- One-on-one support in the home or community to reduce isolation and build confidence

Group Social Support for Older Adults (CHSP program)

- Structured group programs that encourage participation, belonging, and mental wellbeing
- Activities tailored to interests, cultural backgrounds, and ability levels

Home and Community General Respite

- Flexible respite options providing carers with a break while ensuring clients remain socially engaged and supported
- Focus on maintaining emotional wellbeing and continuity of care

Meals Delivery (including monitoring and welfare checks)

- Regular wellbeing checks that provide informal monitoring, early identification of concerns, and trusted social contact

Domestic Assistance and Transport Services (relationship-based support)

- Practical in-home and transport services that also provide consistent social interaction
- Trusted worker relationships that support emotional wellbeing, early identification of issues, and referral pathways

Positive Ageing Care Finders (Aged Care System Navigation)

- Council's Care Finder program provides support for older people who might be at risk of 'falling through the cracks'
- Care Finders supports vulnerable older people who don't have anyone to assist them to navigate My Aged Care, access aged care services and other relevant supports in the community.

Partners:

- Darebin has partnered with Merri-bek and Moonee Valley Councils to deliver this program as a consortium.

Funding:

- Commonwealth funding administered by North West Metropolitan Primary Health Network.

Support for Carers

- Council's Support for Carers program focuses on supporting the wellbeing of unpaid carers in the community.
- Tailored, flexible support to carers, addressing their individual needs.
- Supports can include carer groups, advice, short term respite, material aid, assistance navigating service systems and help with the challenges of caring for someone, like isolation, psychological distress, health impacts and financial stress

Funding:

- State funding (DFFH)

Target Groups

Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)

- Older adults (65+ and 50+ for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people)
- People experiencing homelessness/at risk of homelessness can access the CHSP at Age 50 years or older (or 45 years or older for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people).

Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP)

- People with a disability, aged under 65 (or under 50 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) who are not eligible for, or unable to access, the NDIS, or who have limited supports
- People experiencing social isolation, loneliness, or reduced community connection
- Carers requiring respite support
- Social housing residents and culturally diverse communities
- People with low-level to moderate support needs, including those experiencing mental health challenges

Positive Ageing Care Finders

- Older Australians who are eligible for Commonwealth aged care services and have one or more reasons for requiring intensive support to:
    - Interact with My Aged Care
    - Access aged care services
    - Access other relevant supports in the community.

Support for Carers Program

- The Support for Carers Program (SCP) provides respite, other services and supports for all Victorian carers (including young carers - carers under 25 years), who are caring for someone who:
    - Is older with care needs
    - Has a mental illness
    - Has a chronic illness
    - Has a disability
    - Has dementia (including younger-onset dementia)

How Services are Delivered

- In-home support, centre-based programs, and community-based activities across Darebin
- One-on-one and group formats for older adults, with flexible and tailored approaches
- Outreach to individuals who may have difficulty accessing services
- Relationship-based service model, with consistent workers building trust and connection
- Partnerships with local organisations, community groups, and service providers

Eligibility & Access

- Priority given to individuals with limited supports, vulnerability, or barriers to participation
- CHSP services: Older adults assessed as eligible through the aged care system (My Aged Care) requiring entry-level support to remain living independently
- HACC PYP: Direct referrals through Council (self, family, carers), health services and community organisations
- Care Finders: Supports people who do not have family, friends, a carer, or another trusted person who is willing and able to help them access aged care services and supports.
- Support for Carers Program (SCP): as per description above

Social and Independent Living Teams (Council-funded)

Open access programs, with a focus on older adults at risk of social isolation

Community Activities and Events

- Development and delivery of inclusive activities, including programs aligned with the Victorian Seniors Festival
- Promotion of active ageing, participation, and community visibility

Older Adults Engagement Resources

- Development of community activity guides to support access to local opportunities and services

Support to Seniors Groups and Clubs

- Support to more than 80 local seniors' groups to sustain peer connection, leadership, and community participation

Social Housing Engagement

- Place-based initiatives that engage residents in social housing through activities, outreach, and connection opportunities
- Focus on reducing isolation and strengthening community networks

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Project Zero – Darebin Zero

Project Zero (Darebin Zero) is a Council funded partnership initiative that supports people sleeping rough in Darebin through coordinated, wrap-around responses. The project does not operate as a single service, but instead brings together multiple agencies to improve collaboration, data sharing, and collective responses to rough sleeping. Through regular coordination and shared intelligence, Project Zero aims to improve safety, access to services, and long-term outcomes for people experiencing homelessness.

Key Activities Supporting Wellbeing (Direct and Coordinated Response)

• Multi-Agency Partnership Model

The project brings together Council and specialist services to coordinate support for people sleeping rough across Darebin.

• Data Tracking and Coordination

- Utilises a shared data tracking system to better understand the demographics, needs, and locations of people sleeping rough
- Enables partners to identify trends, gaps, and opportunities for more effective responses

• Regular Partner Meetings

- Partner organisations meet regularly

- Share updates on individuals and service responses
- Coordinate outreach, case management, health, housing, and safety responses

Staff Support and Program Structure

• Staffing

- One dedicated project lead worker employed through Darebin Council
- Additional staffing and frontline response provided through partner organisations

• Operational Approach

- Collaborative and assertive outreach focused
- Emphasis on coordination rather than duplication of services
- Supports partners to work together to provide consistent, wrap-around support

Target Groups

- People who are sleeping rough in Darebin
- Individuals experiencing chronic or entrenched homelessness
- People with complex needs requiring coordinated, multi-agency responses
- Outreach and service delivery occurs across public spaces and service sites within Darebin

Eligibility & Access

- Individuals who are sleeping rough in Darebin are eligible
- Referrals can be made through any partner organisation
- Individuals seeking support can be referred to the Darebin Assertive Community Outreach team
- Email: assertiveoutreach@darebin.vic.gov.au

Partner Organisations

- Darebin Council
- Merri Outreach Support Services
- DIVRS
- Haven Home Safe
- Your Community Health
- Uniting Care
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited (VACSAL)
- NEAMI National
- Northern Health
- Victoria Police

Type of Response

- Tertiary and assertive outreach response
- Coordinated service delivery and systems-level intervention to address rough sleeping

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Bundoora Park Farm

Bundoora Park Farm operates a volunteer program that indirectly supports the wellbeing of community members, including individuals experiencing significant mental health challenges. Although the program does not provide formal mental health support, the farm environment offers meaningful engagement, social

connection, and therapeutic interaction. Staff supervise volunteers but do not have mental-health-specific training.

Key Activities Supporting Wellbeing (Indirect)

- Volunteer Program
- Engages around 30 volunteers, including individuals living with significant mental health challenges.
- Many volunteers seek:
    - Social connection
    - Routine and purpose
    - Low-pressure, therapeutic engagement

Volunteers participate in restorative and meaningful tasks such as:

- Animal interaction
- Gardening
- General farm work

Staff Support and Limitations

- Staff supervise volunteers but do not have formal mental health training.
- When necessary, volunteers may be referred to external mental health specialists for additional support.

Target Groups

- Volunteers with mental health challenges
- Individuals seeking social connection, routine, or meaningful engagement
- Community members who benefit from therapeutic activities in a natural environment

Delivery Location

- Bundoora Park Farm – volunteer activities and daily supervision occur on site.

Eligibility & Access

- Volunteer program accepts applications directly; not designed as a mental health program.
- No formal referral pathways, but staff may encourage volunteers to seek external support if needed.

Recreation and Leisure

Darebin Recreation and Leisure Services currently do not deliver programs specifically designed for people with diagnosed or identified mental health conditions. However, inclusive programming continues to evolve, with new initiatives aimed at providing culturally safe, socially supportive recreation opportunities that may indirectly benefit community members experiencing mental health challenges. The Victorian Government's *Active Victoria 2022-26* strategy identifies that sport and active recreation offers a way to increase social connections and feel a sense of belonging through participation, either as a player, coach, support or volunteer. Our physical and mental health and wellbeing are improved by participating in sport and active recreation as it brings health benefits as well as purpose and structure to our daily lives. Physical activity is a strong protective factor for mental health and wellbeing and the risk of developing a chronic condition can be prevented, in part, by maintaining an active lifestyle.

Key Programs and Activities

Women's Swim Nights – Reservoir Leisure Centre

- A private, culturally respectful aquatic session designed to support women who prefer or require gender-specific recreation environments.
- Provides a safe and welcoming space that may support mental wellbeing through:
    - Increased social connection
    - Comfortable access to physical activity
    - Reduced cultural or personal barriers to participation
- Held on the last Sunday of every month.
- Open to women of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

Get Active in Darebin

- A free, municipality-wide program designed to increase community participation in physical activity and promote social connection.
- Delivered in multiple accessible community settings, including:
    - Darebin sports and recreation centres
    - Darebin parks and open spaces
    - Neighbourhood Houses
    - Senior Citizens Centres
- Activities prioritise inclusion, accessibility, and low-barrier participation, supporting wellbeing for participants who may be socially isolated or face additional challenges.

Eat Well Live Well

- Through coordination and partnership with Your Community Health, participants experiencing mental health challenges and/or living in social housing co-design activities that support wellbeing and social connection. One of these activities is a weekly group gym session at Reservoir Leisure Centre, supported by a qualified Darebin Council Gym Instructor.
- Eat Well Live Well is delivered in partnership with Your Community Health and is offered through the CARE program.

Target Groups

Programs are inclusive of all community cohorts, with a focus on reducing participation barriers.
Target groups include:

- Older people
- CALD communities
- People with disability
- Young people and parents
- LGBTIQ+ community members
- Residents experiencing social isolation

Delivery Locations

- Multiple venues across Darebin, including:
    - Recreation centres, including Reservoir Leisure Centre, Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre, Northcote and Bundoora Park Public Golf Courses, and Narrandjeri and Darebin Community Sports Stadiums
    - Parks and outdoor spaces including sporting grounds, courts and pavilions, tennis and bowls clubs
    - Neighbourhood Houses
    - Senior Citizens Centres

Eligibility & Access

- No referral pathways required.
- Participants may register or attend directly, depending on the activity.

Community Places and Programs

The Community Places and Programs Team manages and supports community access at key neighbourhood facilities, including the East Preston Community Centre (EPCC) and the Intercultural Centre. While the team does not deliver designated mental health programs, several activities and partnerships indirectly support residents who experience social isolation, hardship, or unmet mental health needs.

Key Programs and Activities

East Preston Community Centre (EPCC)

Primarily used by residents aged 55+, EPCC hosts a range of low-barrier community activities:

- EPCC Open Day (Wednesdays)
    - Facilitated with an on-site complex case worker from DIVRS (funded by Council).
    - Supports community members experiencing hardship, food insecurity, or complex social needs.
    - DIVRS presence also occurs at Reservoir Neighbourhood House.
    - Funding for this support arrangement runs until June 2026.
- Health and Wellbeing Sessions – 2nd Wednesday of each month
    - Delivered with La Trobe University nursing students, providing:
        - Basic health checks and referrals
        - Informal monitoring for underlying health or mental health issues
        - Arts and craft sessions in a socially supportive environment
- Food relief and hardship support offered on-site during open sessions.
- Thursday Activities (Intercultural Centre crossover)
    - Social programs to support inclusion and community connection.

Intercultural Centre

- Hosts a variety of inclusive programs for diverse community members.
- Includes a designated quiet space, which is useful for individuals who become overwhelmed or require a low-stimulus environment.
- Programming supports social connection, intercultural dialogue and community resilience.

Neighbourhood House Network Support

- Council funds 7 Neighbourhood Houses, which deliver:
    - Social diversity and inclusion programs
    - Pathways for women returning to the workforce
    - Low-barrier community development activities

      These programs often function as informal wellbeing supports for residents facing social or mental health challenges.

Target Groups

- CALD community members
- Socially isolated residents
- Community members experiencing hardship or complex social needs
- Individuals requiring low-barrier, welcoming community spaces

Delivery Locations

- East Preston Community Centre (EPCC)
- Intercultural Centre
- Neighbourhood Houses across Darebin

Eligibility & Access

- Open community access—no referral pathways required.
- Activities are free or low-cost depending on the program.

Libraries

Darebin Libraries do not provide programs specifically targeted at people with diagnosed or formally identified mental health conditions. However, libraries play an important role in supporting general mental health and wellbeing through inclusive practices, partnerships, community connections, and low-barrier programs. Libraries frequently collaborate with specialist organisations to deliver health, wellbeing, and social-connection initiatives, and they informally connect community members to external services.

Key Programs, Partnerships & Activities Supporting Wellbeing

Health and Wellbeing Programming Through Partnerships
Libraries collaborate with a range of organisations to deliver inclusive, wellbeing-focused activities, exhibitions, and events, including:

- Merri Outreach Support Service (MOSS) – joint exhibitions supporting community inclusion
- NeuroConnect – wellbeing-focused programming
- Arts Project Australia – arts-based initiatives promoting creative expression and mental wellbeing
- Thorne Harbour Health – LGBTIQA+ inclusion programming and community outreach

These partnerships allow the library to host activities that foster connection, reduce social isolation, and increase access to health information.

Reservoir Community Support Program – DIVRS Partnership (MoU)

- Darebin Libraries and DIVRS have a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to deliver weekly community support sessions at Reservoir Library.
- Community support worker placement students attend these sessions to help residents with:
    - Access to services
    - Financial hardship information
    - Food relief
    - Social isolation
    - Mental health challenges
- This program functions as a low-barrier, early-intervention support point for vulnerable community members.

Reservoir Community Support Project – Your Community Health (MoU)

- An MoU with Your Community Health supports informal wellbeing activities, including:
    - Coffee mornings
    - Low-key social engagement opportunities
- Programming aims to reduce isolation, normalise help-seeking, and connect residents to health and wellbeing services in a casual, accessible environment.

Townhall Avenue Social Housing Support – Thorne Harbour Health Partnership

- The library partners with Thorne Harbour Health to support residents of the Townhall Avenue social housing complex.
- Activities focus on:
    - LGBTIQA+ inclusion
    - Community connection
    - Increasing awareness of library services
- Preston Library provides space for resident-led social connection, such as an informal drawing group that meets regularly.

Role of Libraries in Mental Wellbeing

While not a clinical service, libraries contribute to mental wellbeing by:

- Offering welcoming, free public spaces that reduce isolation
- Providing inclusive programming with community partners
- Offering informal referrals through conversations, events, and community support workers
- Supporting vulnerable residents through safe social environments

Target Groups

- General community members seeking social connection
- People experiencing financial or social hardship
- Residents of social housing
- CALD community members
- LGBTIQA+ communities
- People experiencing mild or emerging mental health challenges (informal support)

Delivery Locations

- Reservoir Library (major site for community support programming)
- Preston Library (social groups and LGBTIQA+ inclusion activity)
- Other Darebin Library branches, depending on partner programming and exhibitions

Eligibility & Access

- All programs are free and open to the public.
- No referral pathways required.
- Access is through regular library use, programmed events, or attending community support sessions.

Festival and Events

The Festival and Events team does not deliver programs or hold designated roles that directly support people with diagnosed or formally identified mental health issues. However, arts programming plays an important role in the broader wellbeing ecosystem by fostering social connection, inclusion, cultural expression, and community cohesion. Many initiatives indirectly support mental health through safe, creative, and culturally grounded engagement.

Collaborations With Artists and Disability Arts Organisations

Arts programming sometimes intersects with themes of mental health or disability through:

- Work with companies such as Rawcus (a disability-led ensemble known for inclusive practice)
- Projects involving artists living with disability or psychosocial conditions
- Initiatives focused on expanding access to the arts for underrepresented groups

These projects centre dignity, representation and access rather than clinical mental-health intervention.

Aboriginal Partnerships

Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnership role does not deliver direct programs specifically targeting people with identified or diagnosed mental health conditions. Instead, the role focuses on community engagement, relationship-building, and supporting self-determination by ensuring that specialist Aboriginal community-controlled organisations remain the primary providers of culturally safe mental health and wellbeing services.