

Dr Deanna Bowen Hons. Psych., MSW (Clinical), DSW Local Eating Disorder Coordinator, Northern NSW Local Health District, *NORTHERN NSW*

Dr Deanna Bowen is the Local Eating Disorder Coordinator for the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD).

She is an experienced clinician with an Honours Degree in Psychology, a Master's degree in Clinical Social Work, and a Doctorate in Social Work.

Originally trained in Canada, Dr Bowen's interest in eating disorders stemmed from her Honours thesis, sparking a long-standing commitment to the field. After moving to Australia in 2000, she commenced working in Youth and Family Mental Health services in 2002.

In 2016, she assumed the role of Northern NSW Eating Disorder Coordinator. In this position she works with adolescents and families affected by eating disorders and brings extensive hands-on experience to this specialised area.

In 2019, Dr Bowen completed her doctoral research at Charles Sturt University (CSU), investigating rural mental health care with her thesis titled *'Exploring the Treatment of Eating Disorders in Rural Australian Health Settings: Towards a Model of Effective Rural Service Delivery'*.

Dr Bowen is a strong supporter of the InsideOut Institute's eClinic – Australia's first free, fully online, national treatment hub for eating disorders. It offers flexible, self-paced programs, including BEEt for binge eating and bulimia nervosa, SkilledED for a wider range of eating disorder symptoms, SupportedED for carers, and a Healthcare Professionals (HCP) Hub. By removing traditional barriers to care, the eClinic ensures patient access to vital support when they need it most, regardless of their postcode, socio-economic status, or cultural background.

According to Dr Bowen, the eClinic has the ability to transform access to care for those living with eating disorders, and their families. By offering timely, evidence-based treatment and reducing the burden on traditional eating disorders services, the eClinic can play a crucial role in reducing wait times and reaching those in underserved areas.

"The NSW Service Plan for People with Eating Disorders 2021 – 2025, and its predecessor (2013-2018), has been instrumental in embedding eating disorders as core business in public health settings.

"Unfortunately, the rates of eating disorders continue to rise, and the pressure on current systems is increasing. From a regional/rural perspective, it is often difficult to access eating disorder treatment outside of public services both due to a lack of private mental health providers in rural and regional settings, combined with a lack of therapists in the local area with the clinical expertise in evidence-based eating disorder treatment," said Dr Bowen.



"People living with eating disorders often spend lengthy periods of time trying to access treatment during a time that could be spent on recovery if there were easier access to services.

"The InsideOut e-clinic offers an innovative way of increasing access to services, and transforming the treatment landscape," Dr Bowen said.

"The e-clinic has the potential to be life-changing for people living with eating disorders by providing easy access to free, evidence-based care, and invaluable support for families and carers."

Should you suspect you, or a loved one, may be living with an eating disorder, speak to your local healthcare practitioner without delay, or head to insideoutinstitute.org.au to complete our online screener and assessment, and to access more information and professional support.

Australian professional patient support services offering 24/7 helpline services include:

- **Butterfly National Helpline: 1800 334 673**
- **Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636**
- **LifeLine: 13 11 14**
- **Men's Line Australia: 1300 78 99 78**
- **Kids Help Line: 1800 55 1800**

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