

“Growing your own mental health workforce”

*The development and implementation of a
unique Primary Mental Health Internship
Program*



Mental health workforce issues

- Recruitment and retention to the mental health workforce remains problematic
- Inequity in workforce distribution between metropolitan/rural locations-also across clinical settings
- Shift in nursing from inpatient to community settings with growing interest in primary health care (MHNIP)



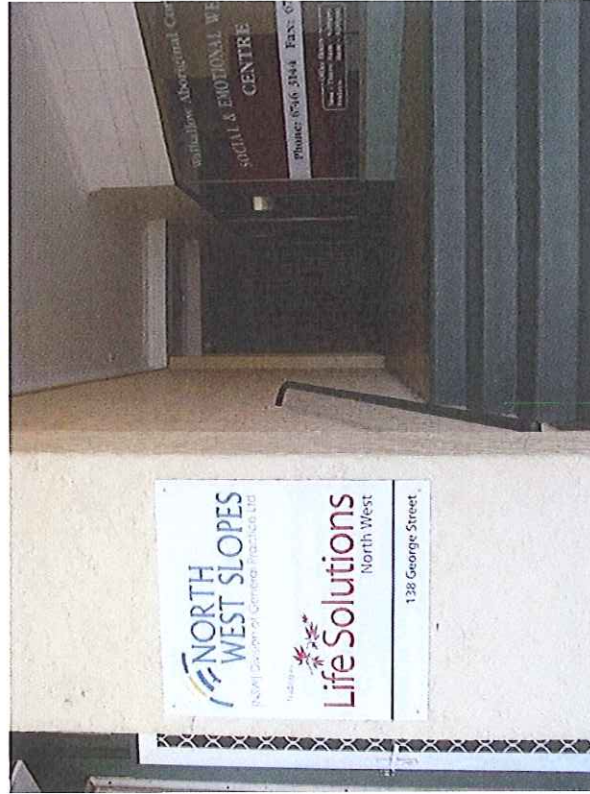
Life Solutions North West

- Funded by MHSRRA
- NWSDGP
- GP referred clients
- Brief solution focused intervention
- High prevalence- mild to moderate acuity
- No cost to client and targeted to low income earners
- Hub and spoke model

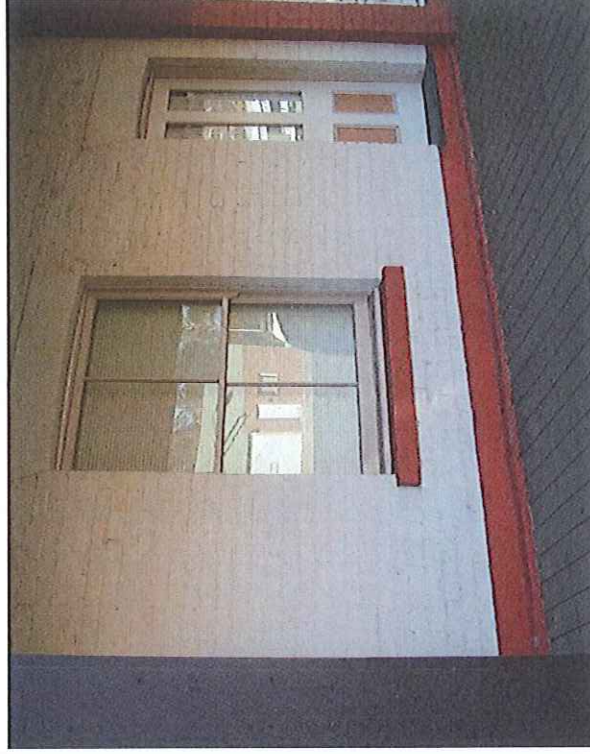


Smaller rural communities

Quirindi premises- October 2009



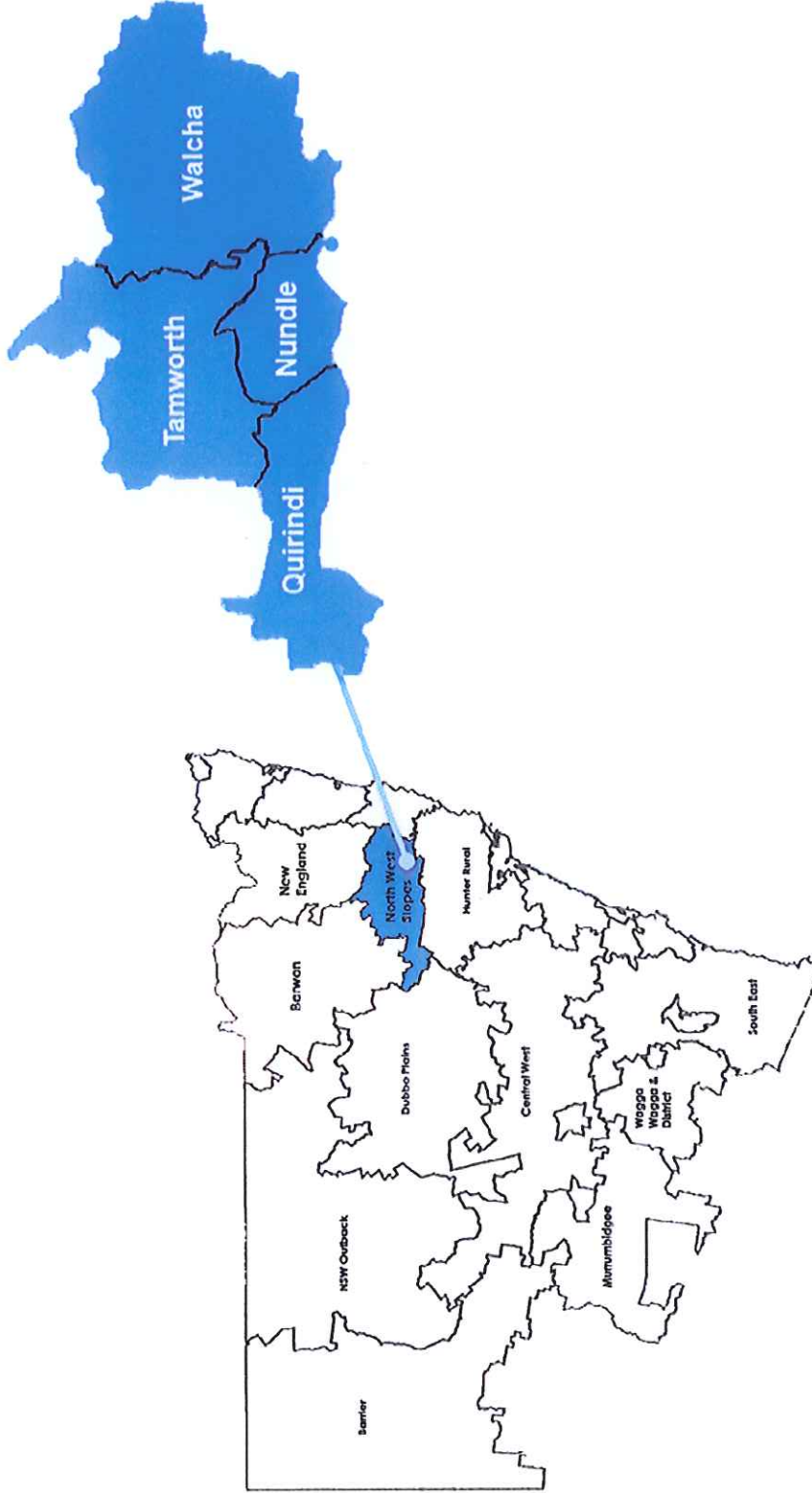
Walcha premises- September 2010



University Department of Rural Health
& Rural Clinical School
Northern New South Wales



Geographical perspective



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Life Solutions
North West



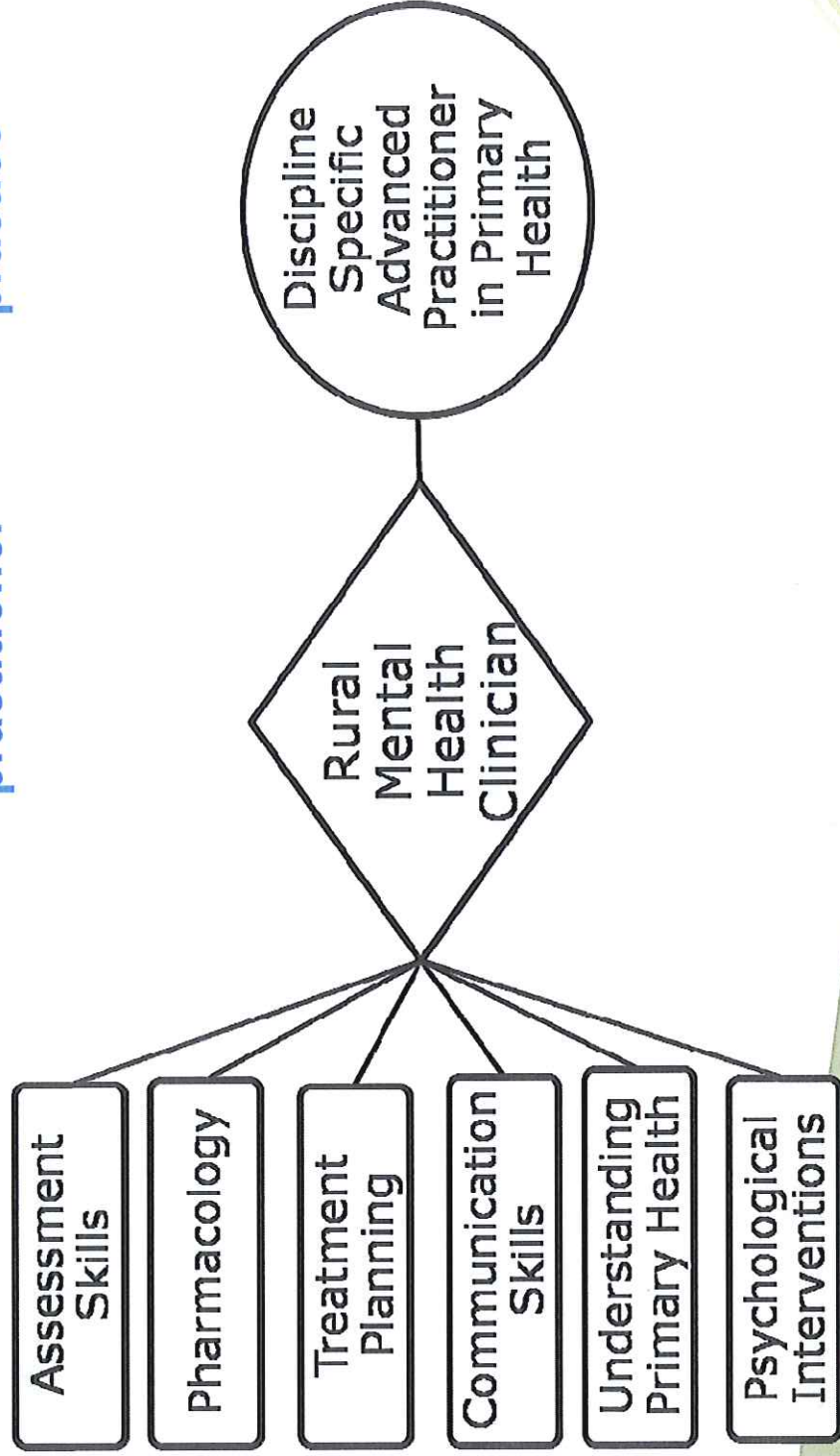
Workforce profile

- Initial workforce heavily influenced by psychology
- Increase in professional mix to include OT, SW and MH Nurses
- Gradual shift in workplace culture towards interprofessional practice
- Development of interprofessional model of care for rural mental health clinicians



Interprofessional Model of Care

Core competencies Competent practitioner Advanced practice



Competency development

- Existing mental health competencies were examined from the four disciplines and used as the foundation
- Identification of 6 core common competencies relevant to primary mental health
- Development of 26 specific competencies within that framework



Competency development

- Developed by clinicians who are currently practicing
- Interprofessional approach to the development of the competencies
- Relevant to rural primary mental health practice
- Contextual yet skill specific



Recruitment to intern program

- Selection criteria
- Incentives to the program-strong focus on flexible access to professional development and research
- Competitive wages
- Assistance with progression of career paths
- Advertised as an intern program
- Two FT applicants appointed in Nov 2009

