**Abstract Submitted for the 4th Rural Health and Research Congress**

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**Congress stream:** Partnerships and integrated care - connecting rural people and services

**Alternate Stream**: Mental health/drug and alcohol-a focus on recovery

**Abstract Title:** Healthy Minds and Bodies: Headspace and Dietetics connecting to enhance the health and wellbeing of Young People with Disordered Eating in Rural NSW.

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Background: Early identification and intervention reduces the impact of eating disorders on young people. Headspace provides youth supportive early intervention, an optimal setting for outpatient treatment for disordered eating. However, treatment is complex and requires clinical expertise. In rural NSW there are few clinicians highly skilled in this work. Empowering rural workers to identify earlier improves outcomes.

Approach: A project identified the need to enhance headspace staff awareness of disordered eating, improve management and streamline referral processes to dietitians. Dietitian conducted food and body image education led to staff attending further training in identifying young people with disordered eating. Headspace identified an in-house disordered eating dietetic service a priority.

Outcomes: Collaboration between health dietitians and headspace has enabled earlier detection and treatment for young people with disordered eating in Tamworth NSW. Headspace intake forms were adapted with detailed questions about food and body image. Referral processes to dietitians were improved and referral numbers increased markedly. This led to a health provided headspace based disordered eating dietetics clinic one day per week with a 97% attendance rate. Dietitian led clinical case review, staff inservices and cooking classes have expanded the service since inception.

Take home message: Connecting health and headspace allows better access for young people to specialised services. Connecting specialist services with young person friendly environments improves outcomes.