

ConnectWell- Stepped Care for People Accessing Residential AOD Treatment

ConnectWell is Lives Lived Well's purpose-built digital platform, designed to extend mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) support to consumers regardless of where they live. Developed in response to the persistent access barriers faced by people in rural and remote communities, ConnectWell offers an evidence-based, flexible alternative for those who are unable to engage with traditional service models.

The platform combines three key elements: interactive digital modules tailored to individual need through responses to a robust suite of outcome measures (OMs); structured peer support; and access to sessions with a qualified clinician. This multi-modal approach allows ConnectWell to deliver targeted, person-centred care that adapts to changing levels of need.

Many of our residential AOD clients travel long distances to access treatment, often leaving behind rural or remote communities where stigma, service scarcity, and travel burden make ongoing support difficult. ConnectWell is positioned as both a pre- and post-residential 'step', helping to prepare clients for intensive care and maintain gains after discharge, especially when ongoing counselling or face-to-face supports are not accessible.

This presentation will explore the role of digital services like ConnectWell in a stepped-care system, and their potential to reduce treatment gaps across rural regions. It will also reflect on client and clinician experiences to date, lessons learned through implementation, and opportunities for digital platforms to complement, rather than replace, existing face-to-face supports.

By meeting people where they are (literally and figuratively) ConnectWell demonstrates how digital tools can extend reach, enhance continuity of care, and reduce stigma, while supporting transitions in and out of more intensive services in a seamless and sustainable way.

Understand the Role of Digital Platforms in Stepped-Care Models

1. Participants will explore how ConnectWell functions as a pre- and post-residential support option, enhancing continuity of care for clients transitioning through different service intensities.
2. Identify Strategies to Overcome Rural Access Barriers: Attendees will learn how digital delivery can address challenges such as geographic isolation, limited service availability, and stigma in rural and remote communities.
3. Examine the Integration of Peer, Clinical, and Digital Support: Participants will gain insights into how combining outcome-informed digital modules, peer connection, and clinician input creates a flexible and responsive care experience.