

Off the beaten track: characteristics of rural Australian families accessing a mental health intervention

Antonio Mendoza Diaz^{1,2}, **Joshua Broderick**^{1,2}, **Christina Thai**^{1,2}, **Mark Dadds**¹

¹School of Psychology, Faculty of Science, UNSW; ²Royal Far West, NSW

Although there is increasing awareness of the need for mental health services in rural Australia, interventions are not usually developed with this population in mind. It is imperative to recognise the unique characteristics of rural families that pose distinctive strengths and challenges—for mental health interventions in general, and parenting interventions in particular. In an attempt to identify these key characteristics we compare a sample of families accessing parenting interventions in two regions: urban and rural New South Wales. A descriptive analysis of the data reveals important differences in key areas such as socioeconomic status, internet usage, and the quality of family environments. Emerging differences between rural and urban families reveal important targets that ought to be considered when undergoing treatment development and delivery.