



Laying the groundwork for mental health and suicide prevention system reform

Summary of package

With a \$586.9 million investment, the 2023–24 Budget continues reforms to the mental health and suicide prevention system by addressing workforce shortages, extending critical services, addressing urgent gaps and laying the groundwork for future reform.

The Budget addresses bottlenecks in the psychology training pipeline with additional postgraduate psychology places, internships and supervisor training sessions. It will also help upskill the broader health workforce, so they have the knowledge and skills to recognise and respond to mental health issues. Improving the availability of workforce will ensure there is equity in service delivery and enable reform.

The Australian Government is continuing and expanding mental health and suicide prevention supports for:

- people with severe mental illness not in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) who need psychosocial support
- children and young people
- people with eating disorders
- people bereaved by suicide
- people and communities impacted by disasters
- culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including refugees and migrants who have experienced torture and trauma
- First Nations people in the lead up to, during, and following the referendum to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Constitution

The Government's commitment to strengthening Medicare will also have benefits across the mental health and suicide prevention system by increasing access and equity to care for all Australians, through MyMedicare which will allow multi disciplinary teams to deliver tailored care to patients with complex health needs.

Total value of package

\$586.9 million

\$260.2m

**Psychosocial support
(over 2 years)**

\$136m

**Humanitarian and CALD
(over 4 years)**

\$10.5m

**Voice to Parliament
(in 2023–24)**

Who benefits

With 1 in 3 psychologists at capacity and unable to see new clients, people who need access to psychologists will benefit from \$91.3 million over 5 years to address acute bottlenecks in the psychology training pipeline.

This funding will build up the workforce, reduce pressure on the system, and encourage more psychology students to complete their studies while longer-term reforms are progressed. It includes:

- \$56 million for universities to create 500 additional postgraduate psychology places
- \$27.7 million for 500 one-year internships for provisional psychologists
- \$5.9 million for 2,000 fully subsidised supervisor training sessions

The broader health workforce will benefit from \$17.8 million for initiatives to upskill staff to recognise and respond to distress, deliver high-quality mental health treatment, protect the mental health of early-career health practitioners, and continue providing vital support to health workers. This includes funding of:

- \$9.2 million over 3 years for online training, resources and professional development
- \$6.8 million over 3 years for mental health first aid training for 7,800 medical students and 55,500 nursing, midwifery and allied health students
- \$1.4 million over 3 years to ensure undergraduate nursing, midwifery and allied health students receive consistent education in mental health.
- \$0.3 million over 2 years to develop national standards for counsellors and psychotherapists.

Extended funding for child and youth mental health services (\$6.9 million over 2 years) will ensure young Australians can continue to access the:

- Raise Foundation's early intervention and prevention student mentoring program
- headspace youth programs in Newcastle
- headspace digital work and study program for young Australians whose mental health is a barrier to work and study.

Eating disorders have one of the highest mortality rates of any mental illness, and they are on the rise, with an increasing demand for support services. This Budget extends funding to ensure people with eating disorders, their carers and families get critical support and services (\$2.8 million in 2023–24). This includes funding for the:

- Wandi Nerida residential recovery centre in Queensland
- National Eating Disorder Collaboration to develop clinical resources, implement the National Eating Disorders Strategy and support workforce development
- Eating Disorders Families Australia's Strive program, which offers online carer support and education groups
- Butterfly Foundation's Body Bright education program for schools
- Australian and New Zealand Academy for Eating Disorders to continue the eating disorder credential and expand its remit to include GPs.

The broader health workforce will benefit from **\$17.8 million** for initiatives to upskill staff

In the lead up to, during and following the referendum to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Constitution, the Government will provide \$10.5 million in 2023–24 to boost mental health support for First Nations people. Through culturally safe and trauma informed services, support will be provided during this period of heightened mental health and wellbeing risk for First Nations people.

The Government is extending funding for digital mental health services (\$8.7 million in 2023–24), including to continue the Head to Health website while the Government works with the mental health sector to design and implement a sector-led approach for the future of the website platform.

This Budget continues support for Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse communities – who are traditionally less likely to access mental health support – through:

- \$134.8 million over 4 years for the world renowned Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma, which provides specialised trauma support and psychosocial services
- \$0.4 million in 2023–24 to deliver a report on the state of multicultural mental health in Australia
- \$0.8 million in 2023–24 to extend the Embrace Suicide Prevention Pilot.

Critical psychosocial support for more than 18,000 people with severe mental health illness not in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will be extended (\$260.2 million over 2 years). This will help them recover and live safely in the community without adding to the strain on hospital beds or the NDIS.

The StandBy Support After Suicide will continue, with \$14.4 million over 2 years committed. This program helps to prevent suicide and supports people and communities experiencing grief and distress as a result of suicide.

Individuals and communities impacted by disasters will receive critical mental health support through \$7.2 million over 2 years for:

- the Black Dog Institute's National Emergency Workers Support Service
- the Australian Psychological Society's Disaster Response Network.



Funding details

- Extension of terminating child and youth mental health measures – \$6.9 million over 2 years
- Extension of terminating eating disorders measures – \$2.8 million in 2023–24
- Ensuring continuity of psychosocial support for people with mental illness – \$260.2 million over 2 years
- Bilateral agreements with states and territories – postvention national service continuity – \$14.4 million over 2 years
- Mental health support for humanitarian entrants and culturally and linguistically diverse communities – \$136 million over 4 years
- Longer-term mental health support for Australians impacted by disaster events – \$7.2 million over 2 years
- Digital mental health services – \$8.7 million in 2023–24
- Addressing critical shortages in the psychology workforce – \$91.3 million over 5 years
- Upskilling Australia's broader health workforce in mental health – \$17.8 million over 4 years

Funding will **build up the workforce, reduce pressure on the system, and encourage more psychology students** to complete their studies



All information in this publication is correct as at May 2023

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