

Health Ministers Meeting (HMM):

Communique

13 June 2025 – Melbourne

Joint Health and Mental Health Ministers' Meeting Communique

Health and Mental Health Ministers met to reaffirm their collective commitment to national action supporting mental health and suicide prevention priorities. There was recognition of the profound and increasing impact of mental health challenges on individuals, families, and communities across all states and territories. There was also a unified commitment to build a system that is better coordinated, grounded in lived experience and more responsive to the needs of those seeking support.

Ministers met with lived experience and sector representatives who provided their expert advice on matters including Child and Youth Mental Health, Psychosocial Supports and the Mental Health Workforce. Directly hearing from lived experience representatives provided Ministers with an understanding of consumer and carers needs for a more holistic and community focused mental health system.

Ministers are also grateful to the Lived Experience Members of the Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Senior Officials (MHSPSO) Group for their sector perspective statement. This provided influential context and informed discussions of the Joint Health and Mental Health Ministers' (HMHM) Meeting.

Ministers thanked the sector for their insights and lived experience representatives for their continued advocacy and diverse voices from across Australia.

Key priorities at the Joint Health and Mental Health Ministers' Session:

Child and Youth Mental Health

Ministers discussed system level priorities for child and youth mental health reform with a focus on integration of jurisdictional and federally funded mental health supports across the full continuum. This included age harmonisation to improve transitions between infant, child and youth mental health services, and integration of mental health supports with early childhood education and school settings.

Ministers acknowledged the investment across jurisdictions including the \$1 billion investment made by the Australian Government through the 2025 Federal Election to provide more free mental health care. This investment included 31 new and upgraded Medicare Mental Health Centres, increased clinical and peer workforce training, and expanded child and youth mental health services. Ministers agreed to work collaboratively to ensure new investments in youth mental health are integrated effectively with existing services. Expanding headspace and establishing new Youth Specialist Care Centres will fill a gap in the system for young people with more complex and severe mental illness, and ensure they get the specialist help they need.

Ministers agreed children and young people (0-25 years) will remain a priority population in the next National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement. Ministers supported a renewed focus on the National Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy to ensure its continued efficacy and a continued focus on the needs of children across the care continuum. Ministers also committed to continue to focus on building support for children and young people in education settings, and to work with ministerial colleagues in jurisdictional education portfolios to ensure schools continue to support the mental health and wellbeing of children, teachers and the community. A commitment was made to work towards age harmonisation – to ensure young people can access similar services across all jurisdictions.

Ministers discussed online safety and the impacts on the mental health of children and young people and committed to all governments supporting the implementation of the *Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024* in late 2025. Ministers discussed the importance of ensuring lived experience voices and priority populations continue to be consulted on the practical application and co-design of strategies to address these system level priorities.

Psychosocial Supports

Ministers reaffirmed Commonwealth, state and territory governments' shared responsibility and acknowledged the importance of investing in and delivering psychosocial supports to better meet need in the community.

Ministers agreed that addressing unmet psychosocial needs will be one of the central priorities in consideration of the next National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement. Ministers also agreed to at least maintain existing funding for psychosocial support services delivered through the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments, to ensure service continuity for the community

All Ministers agree to consult with lived experience and sector representatives in their Jurisdiction, to inform negotiations of the next National Agreement, and report back at the next Health and Mental Health Ministers meeting, to determine shared priorities and investment plans.

Cross-Border Information Sharing

Ministers discussed interstate linkages and cross-border arrangements, including information sharing and legislation in relation to mental health. Ministers agreed to a National Mental Health Information Sharing Framework, developed by NSW, to improve interjurisdictional information sharing in relation to mental health consumers. The framework seeks to support greater service and treatment provision for consumers who are interacting with multiple or cross-jurisdictional agencies, while respecting their privacy and human rights.

All Ministers support a coordinated approach to national information sharing, noting that successful implementation will rely on states and territories working collaboratively. Ministers appreciate the framework has been co-designed with lived and living experience representatives and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

Mental Health Workforce

Ministers endorsed the publication of the Psychiatry Supply and Demand Study, recognising its value in highlighting workforce shortages and informing future planning. The Study's findings – particularly

the projected undersupply of psychiatrists across all jurisdictions – will support more coordinated and evidence-based workforce planning. Ministers also noted the forthcoming Psychology Supply and Demand Study, which will further support the understanding of workforce dynamics across mental health professions.

Ministers supported the development of a national mental health workforce capability framework. Jurisdictions committed to collaborating through the National Mental Health Workforce Working Group to share existing initiatives and inform the framework's design. This collective approach is essential to addressing workforce shortages, reducing duplication of effort, and promoting equitable access to services. The Commonwealth confirmed the framework will be delivered by June 2026 as a key deliverable under the National Mental Health Workforce Strategy 2022-2032.

Ministers heard the clear and consistent calls from those with lived experience for greater recognition of the value of peer work and the non-medical mental health workforce. There was a strong consensus on the need for coordinated, strategic initiatives—both federally and across jurisdictions—that better integrate and strengthen these roles within service delivery and service development.

Final Review of the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement (National Agreement)

Ministers welcomed the opportunity to discuss the Final Review of the National Agreement, scheduled to be delivered by the Productivity Commission (PC) on 17 October 2025.

Commissioners, Angela Jackson and Selwyn Button, presented on early assessments and proposed recommendations by the PC. These recommendations will be reflected in the interim report (on the Final Review) expected to be made public shortly.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Prescribing

Ministers discussed the recent announcements made by WA, NSW and ACT Governments about ADHD diagnosis and prescribing practices.

Ministers acknowledged that a uniform approach that includes professionals that are appropriately qualified, and with the right safeguards, can improve access and affordability for Australians in need. Ministers noted the Australian Government's response to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee report into ADHD regarding the expedition of nationally consistent prescribing rules for ADHD (Schedule 8 (psychostimulant) medications).

Ministers agreed to discuss options to achieve national harmonisation of ADHD prescribing practices at the next HMHM meeting, and other opportunities to improve patient care, affordability and access to diagnosis.