



Prioritising Mental Health (Pillar 4) – Supporting vulnerable Australians

In response to the Productivity Commission and the National Suicide Prevention Adviser's reports, the Australian Government has committed \$107 million to support vulnerable Australians' access to effective, equitable and culturally appropriate mental health services as part of a record \$2.3 billion whole-of-government mental health and suicide prevention package.

Investment will go towards key initiatives such as:

- \$11.1 million to improve the experience of and outcomes for people with complex mental health needs, including cognitive disability and autism, through a range of targeted initiatives
- \$79 million to address the devastating and disproportionate impact of suicide and ill-mental health on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians through key initiatives under a renewed Indigenous-led National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy, including:
 - \$27.3 million to implement culturally-sensitive, co-designed aftercare services through regionally-based organisations, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations being preferred service providers
 - \$23.8 million to support the establishment of regional suicide prevention networks and a lead commissioning officer in each jurisdiction
 - \$16.6 million to Gayaa Dhuwi and Lifeline to establish and evaluate a culturally appropriate 24/7 crisis line to be governed and delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
 - \$6 million to support national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership for suicide prevention
 - \$1.5 million to support a review to examine the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector delivering mental health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
 - \$1 million to the Black Dog Institute to work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lived Experience Centre to support the inclusion of people with lived experience in the co-design, implementation and evaluation of suicide prevention activity
- \$16.9 million to fund mental health early intervention supports and preventative measures for migrants and multicultural communities, and address the cultural competence of the broader health workforce. This includes continued funding in

2021-22 for the Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma, and support for Mental Health Australia to promote mental health among culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

Key initiatives under the Prevention and Early Intervention Pillar of the Government's National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan will also assist groups that can be more vulnerable to mental health challenges. These initiatives include:

- \$6.3 million to increase specialised early intervention mental health support and suicide prevention services available to fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) and drive-in, drive-out (DIDO) workers, and
- \$0.9 million to continue the Ahead for Business digital hub, supporting small business owners to take proactive, preventive and early steps to improve their mental health.

The provision of these services will help ensure more Australians with diverse needs can access mental health support, including early intervention, which will lead to improved health outcomes.

Why is this important?

All Australians with mental health needs deserve to receive compassionate and effective care. To ensure equity, the Government is prioritising investment for vulnerable population groups.

Investment in workforce capacity building and specialised pilot projects will help remove barriers for people with intellectual disability and autism to improve their access to mental health supports.

Suicide has a disproportionate and devastating impact on Indigenous communities. Indigenous-led solutions, coupled with culturally safe and responsive support services, are essential for supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who may be at risk of suicide or experiencing other mental health crises.

Targeted programs for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people with mental illness will increase awareness and access to services that are culturally appropriate and reduce barriers such as cultural stigma and language.

Providing permanently resettled humanitarian migrants and those on temporary visas with specialist support if they are experiencing psychological or psychosocial difficulties from surviving torture and trauma will enable recovery and healing.

These investments are in response to the National Suicide Prevention Adviser's Final Advice (Recommendations 2 and 7) and the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Mental Health (Recommendations 9, 12 and 16).

Who will benefit?

Australians with intellectual disability (668,100 in 2012) and autism (205,200 in 2018) will have improved access to, and better outcomes from, mental health services. Carers and families will also benefit.

The suicide prevention services specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will support individuals, families and communities at risk of suicide, or recovering from a suicide attempt. It will also strengthen the role and effectiveness of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

Australian from CALD backgrounds with a mental illness will benefit from access to culturally appropriate and equitable support delivered through the Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma, and Mental Health Australia's Embrace Framework.

How much will this cost?

The Australian Government will invest \$107 million over 4 years, from 2021–22.