



Prioritising Mental Health and Suicide Prevention – Treatment (Pillar 3)

The Australian Government is investing \$391.7 million to provide accessible and effective mental health treatment services as part of the *Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan - Stage 2*.

This investment builds on the \$2.3 billion initial phase of the Plan announced in the 2021–22 Budget. Together with other mental health and suicide prevention commitments worth \$648.6 million in the 2022–23 Budget, it takes the total value of the plan to nearly \$3 billion.

Since 2012–13, the Australian Government’s investment through the Health portfolio in mental health and suicide prevention has more than doubled (106% increase), growing from \$3.3 billion to an estimated \$6.8 billion in 2022–23.

Since 2012–13, the Australian Government has driven significant developments in mental health treatment including:

- increasing the number of headspace services for young people Australia-wide from 56 services in 2013–14 to 164 by 2025–26
- expanding the Medical Benefits Schedule (MBS) Better Access initiative to make an additional ten sessions available to all Australians and expand eligibility to aged care residents in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as provide access to family and carers, and encourage greater use of group therapy, and
- introducing the first dedicated Medicare services for patients with eating disorders and funding the Wandjina residential eating disorder treatment centre on the Sunshine Coast, with six additional centres around Australia to commence operations in 2023–24.

Protecting the mental health of young Australians

The Australian Government will commit \$15.9 million to ensure young Australians can continue to access critical mental health services as they recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes:

- \$14.3 million to continue funding for the *headspace Schools Suicide Prevention Activities Program* and *Flying headspace* for a further four years to 30 June 2026, and

the *headspace Digital Work and Study Program* for a further 12 months to 30 June 2023, and

- \$1.6 million to YMCA Peninsula Youth Services for the operation of *Jimmy's Wellbeing Sanctuary*, to continue providing integrated, multi-disciplinary mental health and wellbeing services to young people experiencing mental ill-health in the Southern Mornington Peninsula region for a further four years to 30 June 2026.

Supporting Australians with eating disorders

The Australian Government will invest \$24.3 million to support critical new treatment services and fund existing services for Australians with an eating disorder.

- \$20 million over four years to implement a new program of specialised eating disorder treatment services delivered in the community setting through competitive funding grants for innovative and evidence-based models of care to best address local needs.
- \$1.3 million to the Wandi Nerida residential recovery centre to ensure people with severe eating disorders can access treatment through Australia's only operational residential centre located on the Sunshine Coast.
- \$1.6 million for the National Eating Disorders Collaboration (NEDC) for ongoing development of clinical resources, implementation of the *National Eating Disorders Strategy*, support for clinical workforce development, and provision of independent, expert advice to Government.
- \$1.1 million for the Butterfly Foundation to implement the eating disorder peer workforce project, provide advice to state and territory governments, support the establishment of community-based residential eating disorder treatment centres, and implement the Butterfly Body Bright program curriculum resources in schools.

Enhancing mental health care through case conferencing

Better integrated and holistic care will be provided to all Australians accessing mental health care under the *Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists and General Practitioners through the MBS* initiative (Better Access) or an Eating Disorder Treatment and Management Plan (EDTMP).

\$15.1 million will be provided for new MBS items to allow eligible providers to hold up to four mental health case conferences per calendar year. This will help facilitate collaborative care between a person's general practitioner (GP) or other medical practitioner and others involved in their mental health care, such as a paediatrician, psychiatrist, psychologist, and other allied health professionals.

Providing support to Australians impacted by natural disasters and other tragic events

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring that all Australians have access to high quality, person-centred care in recognition of the significant impact of natural disasters and tragic events on the mental health of many Australians. The Australian Government is investing:

- \$31.2 million in mental health initiatives to support Australians impacted by the recent flood emergency in New South Wales and Queensland
- \$946,000 to extend the MBS items for Australians impacted by the 2019–20 'Black Summer' bushfires for a further six months until 30 June 2022
- \$800,000 to provide for mental health support to Tasmania's Devonport community including families, children and first responders as a response to the 16 December 2021 Hillcrest Primary School tragedy
- \$4 million to the Black Dog Institute to establish a new National Mental Health Service for Emergency Service Workers and Volunteers

- \$5 million to continue the Head to Health Pop Up clinics in NSW until 31 December 2022, and
- \$500,000 to accelerate the provision of headspace services in the Hawkesbury region due to the impact of the recent floods.

Supporting victim-survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence

As part of the Government's commitment to enhance capacity within the health sector for victim-survivors of family, domestic and sexual violence (FDSV), the Government is investing:

- \$67.2 million (2022–23 to 2025–26) to pilot multidisciplinary care teams in six existing locations delivering trauma-informed mental health therapies designed to meet the needs of victim-survivors, and
- \$20 million (over four years from 2022–23; \$25 million over five years) to the Illawarra Women's Centre to support the establishment of a women's trauma recovery centre.

Why is this important?

It is estimated almost one in four Australians experience some form of mental ill health in any given year, while almost one in two Australians will experience mental ill health in their lifetime.

Mental illness significantly increases the risk of suicide, the leading cause of death of people aged 15–44 years.

The mental health and wellbeing of young Australians is a priority for Government as intervention early in life, or in the onset of a mental health issue, can significantly reduce the lifelong impact and burden of the condition and help individuals to achieve their full potential.

The Government is continuing to support young Australians to get the help they need to recover, build their resilience, and return to work and education by:

- boosting the availability of, and access to, appropriate mental health services
- building the mental health literacy of Australian parents to reduce stigma, and support parents to connect with early-intervention supports for their children, and
- investing in services that help rebuild social connection and community for young Australians.

Eating disorders are among the most deadly of psychiatric illnesses. Approximately one million Australians have an eating disorder, but not all are able to access evidence-based care.

The Australian Government's support for innovative new treatment and therapy approaches will see more care available in more places. Improving local access to care will deliver better health outcomes to Australian's battling an eating disorder. In addition, funding for existing initiatives will ensure continuity of support for those currently recovering from these devastating illnesses.

Creating case conference items for patients accessing support under Better Access or with a diagnosed eating disorder ensures they have access to coordinated, collaborative multidisciplinary care to support and improve their mental health outcomes.

Case conferencing is effective in facilitating communication between providers which contributes to a collaborative care approach. It can also help health professionals, family members, carers and the patient discuss what is needed to support the health outcomes that matter most.

We know that the mental health effects of natural disasters can present themselves over a long period of time, and the people impacted by these floods in NSW and QLD have a long road to recovery ahead.

The Government is ensuring that individuals, families and communities directly impacted by the floods will be able to access immediate and ongoing support to reduce the distress and trauma experienced in the face of these floods.

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Supporting recovery from complex trauma reduces long-term impacts on health, educational, legal and welfare systems and reduces the intergenerational transmission of violence. Implementation of specialised trauma-informed mental health therapeutic programs which are recovery-focused and offered over a prolonged period will provide interventions that aim to restore and repair parental and family relationships, and improve long-term recovery.

The establishment of a Women's Trauma Recovery Centre will build knowledge and networks focussed on establishing better pathways to recovery following FDSV. The Centre will create and promote best-practice models of trauma-informed recovery to better inform service delivery.

Who will benefit?

All Australians experiencing mental ill-health, including people living with an eating disorder, their families, carers, and friends, and mental health professionals and services – will benefit from the Australian Government's investment in mental health treatment.

Young people living in Australia experiencing social isolation and mental health challenges will be able to access the help they require, with the support of GPs, nurses and other health professionals, and community and sporting groups. Continued investment in services with flexible and responsive delivery options ensure all young Australians can access appropriate mental health services.

Australians suffering from an eating disorder and their families will benefit from ongoing access to critical treatment services and faster access to additional services, a reduction in wait times and the removal of barriers to treatment. Clinicians will benefit from having access to evidence-based, best-practice clinical guidance.

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring high quality, affordable and accessible care is available when and where people need it. Multidisciplinary care is an important part of ensuring that every person receives the best possible care appropriate to their needs.

Australians living with a mental disorder and accessing care through Better Access or an Eating Disorder Treatment and Management Plan will benefit from access to multidisciplinary case conferencing.

These case conferences can help ensure continuity of care across a range of health care providers and give patients clarity on their care plan, a general understanding of care approaches and expected outcomes.

Australian Government support for multidisciplinary case conferencing also benefits GPs, OMPs, psychiatrists, paediatricians and allied health professionals, to provide holistic coordinated care for patients dealing with mental ill health.

First responders, individuals, families and the broader Devonport community requiring mental health supports and services to assist in the recovery from Hillcrest Primary School tragedy will benefit from the targeted mental health support provide to the community.

Extending the Bushfire MBS items for six months will ensure Australians impacted by the 2019–20 bushfires can continue to access services until 30 June 2022. This will benefit first responders, individuals and families requiring mental health supports and services to assist in the recovery from the bushfires.

The Government's investment in mental health and primary health support will benefit individuals, families and communities in NSW and QLD directly affected by the flood disaster of 2022.

How much will this cost?

The Australian Government is investing \$391.7 million over five years, from 2021–22 to 2025–26.