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Mental Health Australia welcomes new mental health investments

Mental Health Australia has welcomed measures and announcements within the 2018-19 Federal Budget which will see new investments of \$338 million for the mental health sector.

With measures focusing on three key areas – suicide prevention, older Australians and mental health research – Mental Health Australia CEO Frank Quinlan says the new funding initiatives are another step towards improved mental health care, and an improved mental health system.

“We’ve made some important steps forward over the last two years, and the investment in this year’s Federal Budget is more than the last. In fact, it’s nearly twice as much,” said Mr Quinlan.

“We welcome expanded services for older Australians in residential aged care settings. We welcome new programs to build connections for older Australians. And we welcome expanded programs to support people leaving hospital after a suicide attempt.”

“Earlier this week we saw the announcement of more support for people calling Lifeline, and now we welcome a national program to prevent suicide attempts in the first place, as well additional support for rural and remote mental health.”

“The ‘Million Minds’ research fund sees a welcome shift to investment on a 10 year horizon. And the budget also contains measure to provide ‘continuity of support’ for those ruled ineligible for the NDIS.”

“It is encouraging that many of these measures will support Mental Health Australia members including: beyondblue, Lifeline, SANE, the Royal Flying Doctor’s Service, and members of the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses. And in addition, many more members who will likely receive funding once some of these programs are commissioned through Primary Health Networks.”

“We also welcome the announcement of additional resources for the National Mental Health Commission, to deliver on the Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan, a key component of our pre-Budget submission.”

“These budget measures for mental health are welcome, but this doesn’t mean we won’t stop working tirelessly to seek further investment next year, and every year that follows, until the current gaps in the mental health system are finally closed.”

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