

2020 FEDERAL BUDGET

6 October 2020

As has been widely reported, tonight's 2020 Federal Budget is extremely important, occurring at a time of international and national financial instability, driven by the global coronavirus pandemic. A pandemic that has highlighted gaps in our existing mental health infrastructure and provided the impetus for innovation in service delivery, which we will want to build on into the future.

It is in this context Mental Health Australia welcomes the investment in tonight's Federal Government 2020 Budget through mental health-specific measures and further investments across the social determinants of mental health. These are important investments at a time when the nation's resilience is being sorely tested and the impact on mental health and therefore mental health services is profound.

In this most unusual year with Budget being brought down in October means many of the initiatives accounted for in the Budget papers have already been announced. What follows is a short summary of the key measures arising from tonight's budget, which will affect the lives of people with lived experience, carers, and the mental health sector more broadly. More detailed analysis of the budget papers will follow in the coming week.

Mental Health

The Federal Government has committed to invest \$485 million towards mental health initiatives over the course of the Budget Estimates. This is a combination of some measures which have been previously announced and some significant new funding.

The measures are as follows:

Doubling Better Access Initiative sessions (\$100.8 million)

This measure will provide \$100.8 million for up to 10 additional Medicare-subsidised psychological therapy sessions each year for patients with a Mental Health Treatment Plan.

Prioritising mental health – enhancing suicide prevention and continued support

Prioritising Mental Health — continued support

Payments (\$m)

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Health	7.1	-	-	-
Department of Social Services	5.4	13.3	13.4	13.6
Total — Payments	12.6	13.3	13.4	13.6

This includes initiatives that have already been announced. The Government will provide an additional \$62.1 million over four years from 2020-21 (including \$0.6 million per year ongoing) to improve access to mental health services, including:



- \$45.7 million over four years from 2020-21 to expand the Individual Placement and Support program under the Youth Employment Strategy to assist vulnerable young people with mental illness to participate in the workforce
- \$6.9 million over two years from 2020-21 to support digital mental health services including the Australian Government’s mental health gateway Head to Health
- \$5.0 million in 2020-21 to provide parents, guardians and carers with mental health and career information for students in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic
- \$2.3 million over four years from 2020-21 to enhance the national headspace network by upgrading the Mount Barker service in South Australia to a full centre
- \$2.1 million in 2020-21 for the Prevention Hub led by the Black Dog Institute and Everymind to continue to advance research that targets people at heightened risk of mental ill-health and suicide.

Partial funding for this measure has already been provided for by Government.

COVID-19 Response Package – supporting mental health

COVID-19 Response Package — supporting mental health

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Health	43.9	54.4	1.8	-
Services Australia	0.3	0.4	-	-
Total — Payments	44.2	54.8	1.8	-

Since March 2020, the Australian Government has invested \$165.9 million in mental health as part of the COVID-19 response. Telehealth has underpinned mental health support as part of the \$2.4 billion investment.

The Federal Government has also provided support for frontline health workers, older Australians, young people, new parents, and Indigenous Australians with an investment of \$45.6m.

Mental Health – bushfire response

Includes \$50.3m to support people affected by bushfires through funding for trauma response co-ordinators, trauma care training and expansion of mental health services and community grants for bushfire-affected areas, and telehealth services. The Government will also provide funding for immediate frontline emergency counselling and hotlines (\$10.5m).

Supporting Our Hospitals — simpler and more affordable private health cover for all Australians

Supporting Our Hospitals — simpler and more affordable private health cover for all Australians

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Health	5.8	-10.0	-12.5	-14.2
<i>Related receipts (\$m)</i>				
Australian Taxation Office	-	-5.0	-20.0	-25.0

The Government will provide \$19.5 million over four years from 2020-21 to improve the access and affordability of Private Health Insurance. This includes making home and community-based care more accessible through Private Health Insurance commencing with mental health and general rehabilitation services. Formal consultation on implementation will commence with the sector in October 2020.



Adult Mental Health Centres

The Australian Government will provide \$12 million over three years from 2021-22 to establish an Adult Mental Health Centre in South Australia, located in Adelaide. The Centre will provide a range of mental health support services.

Other related health initiatives

Guaranteeing Medicare – Medicare Benefits Schedule review

Guaranteeing Medicare — Medicare Benefits Schedule review

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Health	15.3	-3.1	-10.0	-9.4
Department of Veterans' Affairs	0.1	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2
Services Australia	..	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3
Total — Payments	15.4	-3.6	-10.5	-9.9

The Government will provide \$17.3 million over two years from 2020-21 to continue implementation of recommendations from the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Review Taskforce to ensure patient safety and high quality care.

COVID-19 Response Package

Business Balance — supporting the mental health of Australians in small businesses

The Government will provide \$7 million in 2020-21 to support the mental health and financial wellbeing of small businesses impacted by COVID-19, including:

- \$4.3 million to provide free, accessible and tailored support for small business owners by expanding Beyond Blue's NewAccess program in partnership with the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman
- \$2.2 million to expand a free accredited professional development program that builds the mental health literacy of trusted business advisers so they can better support small business owners in times of distress, delivered through Deakin University.

The measure builds on the July 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update measure titled COVID-19 Response Package — prioritising mental health and preventive health.

Worker Mobility Reduction Payment Initiative

The Government will provide up to \$7.5 million in 2020-21 for a Worker Mobility Reduction Payment, forming part of a \$15 million joint initiative with the Victorian Government. This initiative will enable disability residential service providers to implement worker mobility restrictions (where possible) to help prevent the spread of infection in disability residential facilities. The cost of this measure will be met from within the existing resources of the National Disability Insurance Agency. This measure was announced on 4 September 2020.



Additional funding for domestic and family violence support

The Government will provide funding over four years from 2020-21 to deliver Australia's sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service provided through 1800RESPECT, to provide COVID-specific advertising over the Christmas period, and to meet increased demand.

Further economic support payments

The Government will provide \$2.6 billion over three years from 2020-21 to provide two separate \$250 economic support payments, to be made from November 2020 and early 2021 to eligible recipients of the following payments and health care card holders: Age Pension, Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment, Family Tax Benefit, Carer Allowance, Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holders, Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders, eligible Veterans' Affairs payment recipients and concession card holders.

Redress and memorial for survivors of child sexual abuse

Future National Redress Funding Payments

The Government will provide an additional \$104.6 million over four years from 2020-21 to support the delivery of the National Redress Scheme and to support Independent Decision Makers in offering Redress.

National Memorial for Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

The Government will provide \$6.7 million over four years from 2020-21 to establish a National Memorial for victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse. This measure fulfils a recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
National Disability Insurance Scheme Launch Transition Agency	255.4	191.6	142.1	-
NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission	28.6	23.2	20.1	21.1
Total — Payments	284.0	214.8	162.1	21.1
<i>Related receipts (\$m)</i>				
<i>National Disability Insurance Scheme Launch Transition Agency</i>	-35.2	-40.1	-41.4	-

The Government will provide the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quality and Safeguards Commission with an additional \$798.8 million over four years from 2020-21.



Continuity of Supports

Table 2.3.2: Program component expenses for Outcome 3 (continued)

Program 3.2: National Disability Insurance Scheme					
	2019-20 Estimated actual \$'000	2020-21 Budget \$'000	2021-22 Forward estimate \$'000	2022-23 Forward estimate \$'000	2023-24 Forward estimate \$'000
3.2.1 - Component 1 (NDIS Transitioning Commonwealth Programs and Continuity of Support)					
Annual administered expenses					
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)	190,147	56,737	43,267	45,884	23,160
Total component 1 expenses	190,147	56,737	43,267	45,884	23,160

The Department of Social Services Budget Statements include some Continuity of Supports in the forward estimates.

Job Maker Plan

Higher education – additional support for students and education providers

The Government will provide an additional \$903.5 million over four years from 2020-21 to provide more places and support for people wanting to access higher education due to the impact of COVID-19, which includes creating disciplines of Professional Pathway Psychology and Professional Pathway Social Work to reduce the student contribution amounts for students studying units as part of a pathway to professional qualifications.

Australia's Care and Support Workforce Package

The Government will provide \$19.8 million over three years from 2020-21 for this measure, including: provision of market demand and supply information, broadening the scope of the Boosting the Local Care Workforce program and extending it to 30 June 2023, attracting workers to a career in the broader care and support sector by expanding the scope of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Jobs and Market Fund communications campaign, and identifying opportunities for regulatory alignment and reducing the administrative burden for the care and support workforce.

Students Support Package

Students Support Package

Payments (\$m)

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Education, Skills and Employment	16.6	25.0	42.0	44.0
National Indigenous Australians Agency	1.3	3.8	2.6	-
Total — Payments	17.9	28.8	44.6	44.0

The Government will provide \$146.3 million over five years from 2020-21 for a package of initiatives to improve education outcomes of young Australians, particularly disadvantaged students and those most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and to contribute to social cohesion.

The package includes: \$38.2 million over four years from 2020-21 for The Smith Family to support around 76,000 disadvantaged young Australians to complete Year 12 and move into work, training or further study.



Support for veterans

Mental Health Support for Veterans and Their Families Payments

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Veterans' Affairs	12.7	28.4	29.7	30.7
Services Australia	0.1	-	-	-
Total — Payments	12.9	28.4	29.7	30.7

The Government will provide \$101.7 million over four years from 2020-21 for veterans' mental health support and services. Funding includes:

- a one-off increase to the fees paid to the Department of Veterans' Affairs mental health, social work and community nursing providers and a simplified fee structure for these services
- an additional 10 specialist psychiatry training places each year for psychiatrists to specialise in veterans' mental health care
- expanding the Open Arms' Veterans and Families Counselling Community and Peer program, in addition to developing and implementing an outcomes monitoring framework to monitor and assess Open Arms' services
- expanding digital mental health capabilities through a pilot of web-based forums for veterans and their families, improving access to support for those in regional and remote locations
- extending the Coordinated Veterans' Care program to eligible White Card Holders with an accepted mental health condition.

Transitioning to civilian life

The Government will provide \$17.7 million over four years from 2020-21 (and \$4.4 million per year ongoing) to establish a Joint Transition Authority (JTA) within the Department of Defence to better support Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and their families as they transition from military to civilian life. The JTA will coordinate and provide support programs and services, to ensure ADF personnel are connected with appropriate supports through their transition to post-military life. This measure will implement a key recommendation of the Productivity Commission's A Better Way to Support Veterans Report.

The Government will also provide \$6 million to continue the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program, which promotes the wide ranging skills of our ADF personnel to employers and rewards businesses for initiatives that support veteran employment.

Veteran Wellbeing Centre Program

Veteran Wellbeing Centre Program

\$million	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
2020-21	-	-	3.0	-	2.1	-	-	-	5.1
2021-22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2022-23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2023-24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	3.0	-	2.1	-	-	-	5.1



The Australian Government is providing funding to develop a network of six Veteran Wellbeing Centres across Australia in partnership with Ex-Service Organisations and state and territory governments.

Disaster Response

Supporting bushfire and drought affected communities

The Government is supporting communities hit by the unprecedented 2019-20 bushfires through the \$2 billion National Bushfire Recovery Fund (NBRF). \$1.2 billion of the NBRF has been spent as at 31 August 2020, assisting with economic, community and industry recovery and resilience.

