



Mental Health  
Australia  
Media release

# Mental Health Australia reports to the nation on World Mental Health Day

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One in two Australians have needed mental health support in past three months, according to a landmark report released today, which is World Mental Health Day.

Commissioned by Mental Health Australia, the significant survey, titled *Report to the Nation*, also found reasons for the nation to be optimistic about its wellbeing.

Nine in 10 Australians who accessed mental health support said it improved their mental health and nearly all respondents (98 per cent) felt safe and respected in the support they received.

*Report to the Nation*, a new national survey that covers every age group from age 0 to 80+, also reveals:

- Australians 18-39 years old self-rate as the least mentally well in age comparisons - 6.2 out of 10, with 10 meaning living with excellent mental health;
- First Nations Peoples (5.2) and LGBTQIA+ (5.7) self-rate even lower;
- 66 per cent of Australians have felt happy in the past three-months;
- of the top-five things important for mental health and wellbeing, 41 per cent of Australians cite family/partner support, love and socialising with friends as being key; and
- when Australians have needed mental health support, 55 per cent reached out to family, friends, colleagues, or teachers, 44 per cent went to a GP, doctor or nurse, and 30 per cent went to a psychologist, psychiatrist or counsellor.

Mental Health Australia Chief Executive Officer Dr Leanne Beagley says the inaugural *Report to the Nation* research findings reveal cause for concern but also opportunity for optimism.



“Released today, on World Mental Health Day, the *Mental Health Australia Report to the Nation* is a pulse check on the mental health and wellbeing of all Australians, and, promisingly, the research shows most Australians will reach out to a range of formal and informal mental health supports when needed, and this support is regarded as safe, respectful, and effective in improving mental health,” Dr Beagley said.

“Over the last three months more than half of all Australians (54%) reported needing mental health support and 77% of respondents reported being able to attain it, most commonly from family and friends or health practitioners.

“These findings show people are very willing to help others around them, but many still feel like they should solve their problems on their own perhaps because it’s hard to reach out and ask for help or let people know when you are struggling.

Mental Health Australia Chair, Matt Berriman, said that *Report to the Nation* will be important annual research which, over time, can measure and track how the mental health and wellbeing of the nation evolves each year, and how effective mental health supports are in meeting Australians’ ongoing needs.

“This research was undertaken to help us understand the size of the problem so that we can continue to advocate for a better mental health system in Australia,” Mr Berriman said.

“And it’s not just about solutions we need right now but also meaningful structural reform that ensures a better future. Solutions that will only result from working together – governments, community, and industry – to drive change.”

Dr Beagley said that the findings show there are still concerning significant gaps for priority populations and ongoing factors challenging our nation’s mental health.

“There is much more to do to ensure equitable access to services to improve mental health outcomes,” she said.

“Concerningly, the findings highlight there are significant ongoing factors challenging our nation’s mental health including social disconnection; financial and work insecurity; and global threats.

“The research demonstrates that particular population groups, including First Nations Australians, LGBTQIA+ Australians, regional Australians and carers continue to experience higher rates of mental ill-health, and likely greater barriers to service access.”

Dr Beagley added that the results highlight the importance of social connectedness, and support from friends and family, but that less than half of Australian adults (45%) feel part of a community.

“Quality connections with others is a significant predictor of mental health and wellbeing, with Australians aged 40 – 59 experiencing the highest rates of social disconnection, followed by the 18 – 39 age group.

“The findings also remind us of the importance of being aware of our mental health and that of those close to us, finding a sense of belonging and being connected.

Today, on World Mental Health Day we invite all Australians to visit [www.lookafteryourmentalhealthaustralia.org.au](http://www.lookafteryourmentalhealthaustralia.org.au), sign up, invite your family and friends to follow along and build mindful habits for good mental health during October.”.

Dr Beagley and Mr Berriman travelled to Parliament House today to present *Report to the Nation* to The Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care.

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Editors note: Both Leanne and Matt will be available for interview today, and will be outside Parliament House from 2:30pm.

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#### Background:

- The research takes a holistic approach to mental health, covering the 5 domains of the Contributing Life Framework
- This research covers the full Australian population – across age groups 0-60+, with a particular focus on First Nations peoples and other priority population groups (CALD, LGBTIAQ+, people with experience of mental health challenges, mental health carers, people living in rural and remote areas)
- The *Report to the Nation* will be annual research which, over time, will measure, and track how the mental health and wellbeing of the nation evolves each year, and how effective mental health supports are in meeting Australians’ ongoing needs.
- Involved a survey of a nationally representative sample of 2,537 participants, asking people about their mental health and wellbeing, and experience of mental health supports, over the past three months (May, June, July 2022)
- Mental Health Australia worked with global research company Ipsos for this study.
- The full report is available at [mhaustralia.org](http://mhaustralia.org) on Monday 10 October.

