

# ELECTION 2016

Mental Health  
Australia

## Mental Health Australia Election Report Card

At the start of the 2016 Federal Election campaign, Mental Health Australia wrote to leaders of the major parties asking for their commitment to five key measures as part of our Election Platform. This report card provides a summary of the responses, with direct quotes provided in italics. The full responses are available for download from <https://mhaustralia.org/general/election-2016>. This report card will be updated with any further mental health-related announcements made during the final weeks of the campaign.

### 1. A REDUCTION IN THE NATIONAL SUICIDE RATE BY 50% OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS

#### COALITION

*A new National Suicide Prevention Strategy will address the current fragmented approach.*

*PHNs will commission community based suicide prevention activities.*

No commitment to adopt specific targets.

#### ALP

*Labor is committed to the [NMHC's] recommendation to reduce suicides by 50 per cent over the next ten years.*

*Labor will*

- *develop and implement a National Suicide Prevention Framework which establishes clear incremental targets and measurable outcomes.*
- *establish twelve suicide prevention initiatives... tailored to local community need...*
- *establish the first national minimum data set on deaths by suicide and suicide attempts....*

#### AUSTRALIAN GREENS

*The Greens are committed... to develop and meet targets for reducing suicide over the next 5, 10 and 20 years...*

*The Greens have committed to funding all the recommendations of the [NMHC] on the roll out of twelve large regional trials.*

*The Greens will also fund a \$38.3 million National Suicide Campaign over the next four years to build community engagement and improve data collection.*



## 2. A REDUCTION IN THE MORTALITY GAP FOR PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS

### COALITION

*In November 2015, the Turnbull Coalition responded to the [NMHC's] Review of Mental Health Services and Programmes... The Coalition has committed to a bold package of reforms that puts the individual needs of patients at the centre of our mental health system.*

*The development of 'health care homes' [will] deliver coordinated care, management and support for those with complex ongoing health problems, including patients with a mental illness.*

No commitment to adopt specific targets.

### ALP

*Labor understands the critical importance of access to primary health care for vulnerable groups, including those who have a mental illness.*

*Labor will:*

- *restore indexation of the Medicare Benefits Schedule*
- *reverse... increases to [PBS] co-payments and thresholds;*

No commitment to adopt specific targets.

### AUSTRALIAN GREENS

*The Greens' commitment for an additional \$1 billion over the next four years for primary mental health services*

*The Greens' plan for improved chronic disease management would see an investment of \$4.3 billion over four years.*

No commitment to adopt specific targets.



### 3. AN INCREASE IN THE PROPORTION OF MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMERS AND CARERS IN EMPLOYMENT

#### COALITION

*The Turnbull Coalition is focussed on creating jobs and growth... [and] will consider opportunities to provide training and employment for individuals with a lived experience of mental ill health as a peer support workforce.*

No commitment to adopt specific targets.

#### ALP

*Labor will actively support and promote the activities of the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance and task the Alliance with improving mental health safety and wellbeing, self-help at work, and with reducing stigma and discrimination in the workplace.*

No commitment to adopt specific targets.

#### AUSTRALIAN GREENS

*The Greens would give people... enforceable rights to request flexible working arrangements.*

*The Greens will commit an extra \$400 million to the Primary Health Networks mental health flexible fund over four years... which will result in increasing people's employment prospects.*

*The Greens support developing and implementing a national mental health and psychosocial support Peer Workforce Development Framework, [which] would also increase opportunities for consumers and carers to gain employment as a peer worker.*

No commitment to adopt specific targets.



#### 4. AN INCREASE IN MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER AND CARER PARTICIPATION AND CHOICE IN NATIONAL POLICY DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

##### COALITION

*The Coalition understands the importance of including mental health consumers and carers [in the implementation of PHN reforms] and in future mental health policy responses.*

No commitment to adopt specific targets.

##### ALP

*Labor believes there is merit in establishing a national body for consumer and carer involvement and advocacy and will consider this in government.*

No commitment to adopt specific targets.

##### AUSTRALIAN GREENS

*The Greens have committed to invest \$6.5 million in consumer and carer involvement in mental health reform*

#### 5. MAINTAIN, AT A MINIMUM, OVERALL INVESTMENT IN MENTAL HEALTH, WITH MEASURES THAT SUPPORT FULL INVESTMENT OF COST EFFICIENCIES AND SAVINGS BACK INTO MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

##### COALITION

No commitment to reinvesting efficiencies.

##### ALP

*Labor is committed to maintaining current investments in mental health programs.*

*If any efficiencies are identified, these will be reinvested back into areas of need within the primary mental health system.*

##### AUSTRALIAN GREENS

*The Greens would increase spending on primary mental health care by \$1 billion over four years*

*The Greens would also spend \$40 million on preventative mental health, restore the six extra sessions for Better Access and invest \$150 million in mental health research.*



## OTHER RELEVANT COMMITMENTS

### COALITION

*The new Digital Mental Health Gateway will be established and streamline access to existing.... Information, advice and digital mental health treatment.*

*\$800,000 to develop a new online perinatal depression support tool and smart phone app.*

### ALP

*Labor will provide funding certainty to [Early Psychosis Centres and headspace].*

*Labor has committed \$83.7 million over four years specifically for suicide prevention initiatives.*

*Labor will ensure those living with mental illness, and their carers, who will not receive a package... through [the NDIS] are not forgotten and we will work with state and territor[ies] to ensure that services for those who fall outside of the scope of the NDIS are provided.*

*Labor will also invest \$30 million in targeting at-risk populations such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and Australians with mental illness through Primary Health Networks.*

### AUSTRALIAN GREENS

*The Greens will develop and implement a national mental health and psychosocial support Peer Workforce Development Framework.*

*The Greens will fund a scoping study on the establishment of a new national mental health carer organisation.*

*The Greens' \$10 billion investment in public transport will... improve transport options and reduce social isolation.*

