



Mental Health
Australia
Media release

Integrated, accessible care essential to address gaps in eating disorders treatment

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In response to the issues explored by last night's ABC Four Corners report, Mental Health Australia acknowledges the crisis in eating disorders care and calls on the federal government to put issues of accessible and holistic care at the centre of reform.

As *Four Corners* highlighted, over a million Australians experience eating disorders. This rate has increased over many years but have exploded since the beginning of the pandemic. Anorexia is among the deadliest of mental illness diagnoses.

Acting CEO of Mental Health Australia, Harry Lovelock, says that Australians need a mental health system that can provide integrated multidisciplinary care for people with complex mental health issues like eating disorders.

"Sadly, we know there are life-threatening gaps in the system that need to be filled. We need to create a mental health landscape where everyone, regardless of location, can find the support they need when they need it," said Mr Lovelock.

"Mental Health Australia, along with the organisations, people with lived experience, and professional bodies we represent, advocate for systemic change that will finally address the crisis point individuals with mental ill-health and those who love and care for them are facing," said Mr Lovelock.

Mental Health Australia Board Chair, Matt Berriman, is calling for detail from the government on how they will intend to reform Australia's broken mental health system.

"Many of Mental Health Australia's members like the Butterfly Foundation and Eating Disorders Queensland are doing an incredible job to support those they can but we know access and equity are fundamental issues.



“Access to eating disorder treatment in Australia – along with access to mental health treatment generally – is a postcode lottery. This is why the government must work with the whole health sector – including mental health – to ensure people receive holistic treatment and care.

“We need to see the government’s plan for systemic reform – which as the Productivity Commission’s review suggested in 2020 – will take significant investment over multiple budget cycles,” said Mr Berriman.

Media Contact: Nikki Hogan – 0402 528 022

Mindframe’s Guidelines on communicating about eating disorders is available here.

Helplines:

Butterfly National Helpline: 1800 334 673

Eating Disorders Families Association – 1300 195 626

Eating Disorders Victoria – 1300 550 236

Eating Disorders Qld – 07 3844 6055

Lifeline – 13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467

Kids Helpline – 1800 551 800

Mensline – 1300 789 978

