



Mental Health
Australia
Media release

Mental health reform still in progress

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Mental Health Australia welcomes the Albanese Government's commitment to mental health, but flags the need for more detail and long-term investment in systemic reform.

Mental Health Australia's CEO, Carolyn Nikoloski, welcomed the Federal Budget's focus on responding to some of the urgent service gaps in our mental health system, and reaching those community members who are in greatest need.

"We welcome funding to boost income support measures, and to relieve cost-of-living pressures. Our financial security is intrinsically linked to mental health, and these investments will support improvements to mental health. Likewise, Mental Health Australia supports the much needed \$10.5M for the mental health of First Nations people in the lead up to, during, and following the referendum to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Constitution.

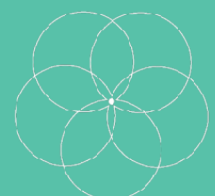
"Mental Health Australia is also pleased to see the continued funding for psychosocial support for people with severe mental illness, who are not eligible for the NDIS; funding to deliver better mental health support for survivors of torture and trauma, and other culturally and linguistically diverse communities; and funding to boost access to bulk billing in primary care.

"The Government's investment in the mental health workforce pipeline, including a \$91.3M package to increase our psychology workforce, will have a positive impact, but it also needs to be supported by funding to strengthen the broader mental health workforce, including a specific focus on peer workers, and a genuine, long-term, funded roadmap for reform.

"Notably missing from the Budget is the Government's response to the Better Access evaluation. We urge the Government to act both quickly and comprehensively, to co-design a more equitable, integrated and community-focused mental health system. We also need to better understand which existing mental health funding is offsetting new investments, and what impact this will have on the community and the sector," said Ms Nikoloski.

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“These first steps are welcome, but it is again, another year, another budget, another missed opportunity for the government of the day to cement the foundations needed for Australia to build a world class mental health system, and improve the mental health of Australia.”

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