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Mental Health Australia welcomes \$74 million boost to mental health services

Mental Health Australia welcomed the Australian Government's announcement of an additional \$74 million boost to mental health services and support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Acting CEO Melanie Cantwell said the increased funding will help meet the ever growing demand on services during this difficult and unprecedented time, as well as expanding proven programs.

"Now is the time to scale up wherever possible, and clearly online and tele-health services are the right step at this time," said Ms Cantwell.

"Having heard from many of our member organisations over the last two weeks or so, there are increasing demands on their services, and they are facing challenges on how they can deliver increased services when face-to-face contact is not possible."

"These new funding initiatives, including expanding tele-health programs run by Lifeline, Kids Helpline and Beyond Blue, will hopefully address those challenges and provide some of our member organisations with the increased ability to deliver potentially lifesaving services where and when they need to."

"These are important measures and they will help improve the mental health of many Australians."

Mental Health Australia also welcomed the National Mental Health Commission's #InThisTogether campaign to raise awareness and promote help seeking by promoting positive ways to maintain good mental health and wellbeing during the pandemic.

"We are already seeing people talking about 'physical distancing' rather than 'social isolation', and that's a huge positive as we want people to stay connected as much as they can," said Ms Cantwell.

"As well as being social, eating well, exercising regularly and sticking to a positive routine will also help with people's mental health and wellbeing, and these are messages we need to keep talking about during this time."

"Ultimately we want people to look after their mental health now, more than ever before, and these new measures will help that happen."

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Online and telephone resources

Head to Health – www.headtohealth.gov.au/

Lifeline 13 11 14 - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Lifeline Text 0477 13 11 14 – 6pm to midnight (AEDT), 7 nights a week

Beyond Blue – 1300 22 463 6 www.beyondblue.org.au

Butterfly Foundation National Helpline: 1800 334 673

Carer Support: 1800 242 636 or 1300 554 660

SANE Australia Helpline: 1800 187 263

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800 www.kidshelpline.com.au

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978

QLife: 1800 184 527

Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling: 1800 011 046

Black Dog – www.blackdoginstitute.org.au

Headspace - www.eheadspace.org.au

R U OK?: www.ruok.org.au

ReachOut: www.au.reachout.com

World Mental Health Day: www.1010.org.au

