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MEDIA RELEASE

MHCA welcomes Liberal commitment to mental health

The Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA) welcomes today's announcement of a \$1.5 billion commitment to mental health by the federal Liberal Party.

The Liberal opposition has committed to a massive increase in mental health funding, including funding an additional 60 *headspace* youth mental health centres, 20 new Early Psychosis Prevention and Intervention Centres and 800 acute and sub acute early intervention beds.

These are significant measures that are desperately needed to address the chronic underfunding and under-resourcing of mental health services across Australia.

We are very pleased that the Liberal Party understands the urgent need for a massive investment in mental health services, especially youth services.

The MHCA has previously called on the Labor Government to increase its funding and commitment to mental health.

Following the Budget and the CoAG health reforms, the MHCA had been vocal in expressing its disappointment with the Government's approach to mental health. The mental health sector had written to the former Prime Minister outlining its concerns and calling for increased investment and for equal levels of care to be provided for mental health consumers.

The Government's National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission report, *A Healthier Future for All Australians*, detailed the measures needed to reform mental health and the costs associated with delivering ready access to care for Australians with mental illness.

Mental health reform cannot wait and there was widespread frustration that the former Prime Minister appeared to view mental health reform as something to be done in the future.

In the interests of the millions of Australians who are mental health consumers and/or carers, the MHCA now calls on the Gillard Government to outline their mental health policies and funding commitments and to commit to implementing all of the recommendations in their own health Commission reform report.

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