



MEDIA RELEASE FEDERAL BUDGET 2018-19

MENTAL HEALTH: POSITIVE STEPS, BUT LARGE SCALE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH JOB LOSSES ON THE WAY

9 May 2018

Last night's Federal Budget has many welcome measures and funding initiatives for mental health care and support.

But we remain concerned that de-funding of the Commonwealth's community mental health programs to fund the NDIS will mean that many Victorians may miss out on essential mental health services. Furthermore, without urgent intervention there will be large scale job losses of specialist community mental health workers in Victoria over the coming 12 months.

"With mental health so chronically underfunded, and gaps in services, this Budget was an opportunity to set in place longer-term reforms and funding," said Angus Clelland, CEO, Mental Health Victoria.

Mental Health Victoria welcomes a range of positive initiatives, including:

- \$33.8 million for Lifeline's crisis telephone services.
- \$10.5 million for beyondblue and \$27.1 million for Primary Health Networks to deliver 'Way Back' one-on-one support to people in the perilous three months following a suicide attempt, however funding is contingent on co-contributions from the states and territories.
- \$20.4 million for the Royal Flying Doctor Service to improve the delivery and availability of mental health services in rural and remote areas.
- \$125 million in funding for mental health research over 10 years under the Medical Research Future Fund.
- \$83 million for much needed mental health services for residential aged care facilities, principally to address loneliness and depression.
- Additional funding for the National Mental Health Commission to deliver on the Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan.
- Confirmation that the NDIS will be fully funded now and into the future, with the Treasurer's assurance: "Every dollar and every cent committed to delivering the National Disability Insurance Scheme remains in place and always will."
- \$64 million to establish an NDIS Jobs and Market Fund.

Quotes attributable to Angus Clelland, CEO, Mental Health Victoria

"We urgently need to see the Federal Government recognise and support mental health prevention programs and invest in helping people with community-managed care."

"The defunding of Commonwealth mental health programs to fund the NDIS will result in large scale job losses of specialist community mental health workers in Victoria."

Mental Health Victoria is the peak body representing mental health services in Victoria.

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