

**Mental Health  
Australia**

# **2020 Federal Budget Analysis**

October 2020



Mentally healthy people,  
mentally healthy communities

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# Contents

<b>Analysis</b>	<b>1</b>
Mental health specific measures	2
Measures across the social determinants of mental health	2
Measures that could benefit mental health	3
Funding for systemic reform	3
Funding certainty for psychosocial services	3
Financial security	3
Safe and secure housing	3
Ongoing funding for telehealth	4
Workforce supply	4
Climate change	4
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>5</b>



Contents continued...

<b>Appendix 1 – mental health specific measures</b>	<b>6</b>
Doubling Better Access initiative sessions from 10 to 20 per year	6
Enhancing suicide prevention and continuing support	6
Private Health Insurance changes – access to community based mental health care	7
COVID-19 response – supporting mental health	7
COVID-19 response package — prioritising mental health and preventive health	7
COVID-19 response package — additional mental health and crisis support for Victoria	8
COVID-19 response package – supporting the mental health of Australians in small businesses	8
Supporting bushfire, flood, and drought affected communities	8
Adult Mental Health Centres	9
Mental health support for veterans and their families payments	9
Transitioning to civilian life	9
Veteran Wellbeing Centre Program	10
<b>Appendix 2 - Measures across the social determinants of mental health</b>	<b>11</b>
Health	11
Guaranteeing Medicare – Medicare Benefits Schedule review	11
People affected by stillbirth	11
Safety	11
Additional funding for domestic and family violence support	11
Future National Redress Scheme funding payments	11
National Memorial for victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse	11
Disability	12
National Disability Insurance Scheme	12
Australia’s Care and Support Workforce Package	12
Worker Mobility Reduction Payment initiative	12
Access to aged care supports	12
Financial security	13
Further economic support payments	13
Employment	13
JobMaker Hiring Credit	13
Education	13
Higher education – additional support for students and education providers	13
Students Support Package	13



## Analysis

Mental Health Australia released a brief Budget Summary on the evening of the 2020 Budget Federal Budget. This more detailed Budget Analysis gauges the value of this Budget in relation to mental health and related investments. It is a difficult task as the transparency of the Budget papers has diminished over time making it harder to ascertain new investments from existing commitments. This is exacerbated in a year when the Budget is tabled six months later than usual due to unprecedented expenditure to address the impact the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nonetheless there are some standout issues. The Government's overall response to the pandemic has been widely supported and, in relation to the focus and expenditure on mental health, world leading. It offered hope through funding increases to mental health and wellbeing support services and financial support to many (but not all) including the most vulnerable through the JobKeeper and JobSeeker investments.

While the 2020 Budget includes modest additional mental health funding by doubling the sessions available under the Better Access initiative, it fails to build in evaluation or requirements for data collection that would demonstrate its value for money. It also goes backward in its support of the most vulnerable through reductions in JobSeeker payment (Coronavirus Supplement), failure to better support women and people facing housing instability and a lack of commitment of ongoing funding for people with a psychosocial disability who are not eligible for the NDIS.

This leaves the mental health sector at a crossroads.

The international pandemic has sorely tested the resilience of all Australians but on the other hand the pandemic has also offered opportunities to innovate the way services are delivered. At the same time, Australia's mental health system has been put under the microscope through the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into mental health with the final report yet to be publicly released by Government.

In a year that started with the devastation of bushfires and responses underpinned by the principle of 'building back better', it seems this Budget has missed the opportunity to highlight and expand innovative practices developed during the pandemic. In addition, although there are some investments made across the social determinants of mental health, there are glaring omissions in areas such as housing and financial security both of which are directly related to mental health and wellbeing.

In other words, while there has been welcomed investment to meet some of the additional demand created by these extraordinary times, Budget 2020 still leaves Australia's mental health system treading water and does not take us forward. We can only hope that the next big forward step will come when the Productivity Commission's final report is released and recommendations turn into reform.

Below we consider mental health specific measures, followed by measures across the social determinants of health, and finally comment on the types of measures not present in the 2020 Budget that Mental Health Australia considers would directly benefit the mental health of all Australians. In addition, there is a full list of relevant budget measures provided at Appendices 1 and 2, with wording extracted from Budget Papers and Budget Publicity.



## Mental health specific measures

The Federal Government reports it has committed to invest \$485 million towards mental health initiatives over the course of the Budget Estimates. This is a combination of some measures that have been previously announced and some new funding.

The most significant investment of funding is the doubling of Medicare subsidised sessions available under the Government's Better Access initiative. This is both an expansion and extension of the Better Access Pandemic Support measure announced in August, which made 10 extra sessions available to people in areas subject to public health orders or required to isolate or quarantine. The 2020 Budget measure expands the availability of the 10 extra sessions to anyone who has a mental health treatment plan and a referral for an additional 10 sessions from their GP, whether they are in an area covered by public health orders or not. It also extends the measure to 30 June 2022. As this is a significant investment, it is crucial the Government undertakes a sound evaluation of this initiative and requirements for data collection that would provide evidence of its effectiveness. For example, an evaluation could test whether the program increases both access to psychological services and patient outcomes from use of those services.

Budget 2020 also reports on important funding measures attached to the National Mental Health and Wellbeing Pandemic Response Plan (the majority of which has already been announced this year) alongside investments in suicide prevention, veterans mental health and a new Adult Mental Health Centre in Adelaide. These investments are welcome. They go some way to help meet the additional demands placed on the mental health of Australians during the pandemic.

However, they are not sufficient to bring about the type of systemic reform required to build a mental health system for the future. By postponing any systemic reform outlined in the as yet unreleased Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health, the Government is delaying an important once in a generation opportunity for reform.

In addition, the Government fails to address significant gaps in community mental health and in particular psychosocial services. Budget 2020 has heightened concern that 2021 will herald a type of 'back to the future' moment for psychosocial services, with uncertainty continuing in relation to what will happen with the National Psychosocial Support Program post June 2021. Lack of certainty of funding for these community based services raises grave concerns about the possibility of a funding cliff with serious workforce, and therefore service implications, come June 2021. The Government is awaiting the results of an evaluation of the program by Nous Group, which will provide advice about the future of the program to Government in 2021.<sup>1</sup> It will be important for the Government to communicate with psychosocial service providers as soon as possible on future directions of this program. This is discussed further under the below section 'Measures that could benefit mental health'.

For a full list of mental health specific measures see Appendix 1.

## Measures across the social determinants of mental health

In addition to the mental health specific measures, it is important to acknowledge measures across the social determinants of health, as we know these impact directly on a person's mental health. Budget 2020 includes some solid investments across the social determinants including implementing recommendations from the Medicare Benefits Schedule review, supporting people experiencing domestic violence, supporting people experiencing stillbirth of their child, providing redress for those who have experienced child sexual assault, supporting people experiencing disability, some economic support payments, and some support for students and young people to get back into work.

However the Budget fails to protect some of the more vulnerable groups in our community. For example, there are omissions in terms of financial security and social housing discussed further in the 'Measures that could benefit mental health' section below. Safe and secure housing and financial stability both impact directly on mental health. Failing to get investments in these issues right has the potential to undermine the impact of sound mental health specific investments.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health (14 April 2020) *Psychosocial support for people with severe mental illness*. Retrieved 13 October 2020 from <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/psychosocial-support-mental-illness>



For a full list of measures across the social determinants of health see Appendix 2.

## Measures that could benefit mental health

### Funding for systemic reform

As discussed above, Budget 2020 makes important investments to respond to the pandemic, alongside other mental health specific measures and those across the social determinants of mental health. However it fails to provide significant investment in systemic mental health reform to create a mental health system for the future, based on the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health.

### Funding certainty for psychosocial services

Budget 2020 failed to provide funding certainty for the National Psychosocial Support Program or Continuity of Supports specifically tailored for people with psychosocial disability. This leaves people with psychosocial disability, their families and service providers facing uncertainty into the future.

Nous Group is undertaking an evaluation of the National Psychosocial Support Program and Continuity of Supports, due to be completed in December this year.<sup>2</sup> It will provide advice to Government in 2021 on future directions. Mental Health Australia is concerned that these timeframes leave psychosocial services and mental health consumers accessing these services in uncertainty. This can have serious flow on effects for the psychosocial service workforce and therefore service availability regardless of whether continued funding is eventually provided.

### Financial security

In our **pre-budget submission** and **addendum**, Mental Health Australia called for an immediate increase to Newstart (now JobSeeker), establishment of a mechanism to ensure payments are set at a rate determined independently to meet reasonable cost of living, and for JobKeeper to be continued to mitigate the worst economic and mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There is strong interdependence between financial insecurity and experience of mental ill health. A fair and equitable income support system is fundamental in keeping people out of poverty and supporting the social and economic participation of all Australians.

The JobKeeper rates were reduced from 28 September 2020, and are currently only available until 28 March 2021. As previously announced, the Coronavirus Supplement will continue to be paid to income support recipients at the reduced rate of \$250 per fortnight until 31 December 2020. The Budget also reflects announcements to temporarily relax the JobSeeker partner income test to increase eligibility.

These previously announced temporary increases were certainly welcome. Unfortunately however, this Budget provides no certainty for people reliant on JobKeeper and JobSeeker. After 31 December the rate of JobSeeker looks to return to that prior to the Coronavirus Supplement, which was so far below current costs of living as to reduce people's ability to meaningfully participate in society.<sup>3</sup>

### Safe and secure housing

Safe and secure housing is fundamental for mental wellbeing. Mental Health Australia called for the Australian Government to co-invest with state and territory jurisdictions in this Budget in social housing and housing support for people experiencing mental ill health, and develop a mental health housing strategy to support investment in expanding current programs shown to be effective in integrating housing and mental health support.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Department of Health (14 April 2020) Psychosocial support for people with severe mental illness. Retrieved 13 October 2020 from <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/psychosocial-support-mental-illness>

<sup>3</sup> Mental Health Australia (2019). *Submission to Senate Inquiry into Adequacy of Newstart*. Retrieved 9 October 2020 from [https://mhaustralia.org/sites/default/files/docs/mental\\_health\\_australia\\_pre-budget\\_submission\\_2020-21\\_-\\_final\\_31\\_jan.pdf](https://mhaustralia.org/sites/default/files/docs/mental_health_australia_pre-budget_submission_2020-21_-_final_31_jan.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Mental Health Council of Australia (2009). *Home Truths - Mental Health, Housing and Homelessness in Australia*. Canberra



However, this Budget falls well short of the need for investment in social housing. Alarming, ACOSS reports there has been a \$41m cut in the National Housing and Homeless Agreement from 2021-22.<sup>5</sup>

There are some measures to support increased demand and housing supply, boosting the construction industry, including: extension to the First Home Loan Deposit Scheme, increasing the cap on guaranteed liabilities by a further \$1billion to support the construction of affordable housing through the Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator, and independent review of the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation. These measures total \$0.6 million over four years from 2020-21 (with a fiscal balance impact of \$15.8 million over four years from 2020-21).

There are some measures to support remote housing, with an “equity injection to the Indigenous Home Ownership Program” of \$150 million over three years from 2020-21. This measure will provide funding to Indigenous Business Australia for new housing construction loans in regional Australia.

The Government will also provide a one-off \$100 million to Queensland to assist with costs associated with the provision of remote housing, as part of the agreement reached with the Queensland Government to assume full responsibility for housing in remote communities.

As part of disaster relief funding, the Government will also provide \$17.5 million under Category D of the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements to rebuild public housing in the Northern Territory damaged by Tropical Cyclones Lam and Nathan in 2015.

However as a range of other advocates have pointed out, these short-term funds fall well-short of the investment that is needed in social housing growth, and follow significant cuts to housing and homelessness services over the last three years.<sup>6</sup>

## Ongoing funding for telehealth

The Budget has not provided further funding for expanded telehealth services beyond the previously announced 31 March 2021 deadline. However a Budget factsheet from the Department of Health states “the Government is developing options for the permanent adoption of telehealth beyond the COVID-19 pandemic”<sup>7</sup>, and the Budget includes \$18.6 million in funding to “begin system changes to support future reform”.

Telehealth services for people experiencing mental health issues should continue to be funded beyond the pandemic, and expanded to include people living in residential aged care. Mental Health Australia advocates that telehealth services should be located within a broader model of team-based mental health care, delivered according to clear standards and at low cost, and include a system of accountability for safety and quality.

## Workforce supply

While the \$53.6 million funding package to support innovative models of primary care to address rural workforce shortages and Rural Health Multidisciplinary Training Program infrastructure is welcomed and necessary, without expressly funding positions for the rural mental health workforce it will remain underfunded.

## Climate change

Climate change is one of the greatest threats to human health, including mental health and wellbeing, in the 21st century. While dealing with the immediate health challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, we cannot afford to ignore the ongoing climate crisis. The Australian community, federal, state and territory

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<sup>5</sup> Australian Council of Social Service (2020), *Post Budget Briefing Media Release*, Retrieved 9 October 2020 from [https://www.acoss.org.au/media-releases/?media\\_release=post-budget-briefing-media-release](https://www.acoss.org.au/media-releases/?media_release=post-budget-briefing-media-release)

<sup>6</sup> Smith, Jenny as cited in Coggna, M. (2020) *Social Housing Left High and Dry in 2020 Budget*. Retrieved 12 Oct 2020 from

<https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2020/10/housing-and-homelessness-advocates-say-this-years-budget-was-a-missed-opportunity/>

<sup>7</sup> Department of Health (2020). *Strengthening Primary Care – COVID-19 pandemic response – primary care*. Retrieved 12 Oct 2020 from <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/10/budget-2020-21-strengthening-primary-care-covid-19-pandemic-response-primary-care.pdf>



governments have come together to protect our health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we must do the same to limit and respond to climate change.

However in a Budget charting a path for economic recovery, the Australian Government has failed to invest in long-term strategies to limit climate change and promote environmental sustainability. This failure to acknowledge and mitigate the impacts of climate change will undermine both economic recovery and health protection efforts for current and future generations.

## Conclusion

While the 2020 Federal Budget makes much needed investments to respond to the mental health crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic, it does not address chronic underinvestment in Australia's mental health system. It does not harness opportunities to build on innovative service delivery solutions enacted during the pandemic, and it does not protect those people most vulnerable to experience mental ill health in our communities.

After further analysis of the 2020 Federal Budget, Mental Health Australia eagerly awaits the public release of the Productivity Commission's final report from its Inquiry into mental health, in the hope that in response to this the Government can commit to significant long-term reform for our mental health system, including investments across the social determinants of mental health.



## Appendix 1 – mental health specific measures

### Doubling Better Access initiative sessions from 10 to 20 per year

This measure will provide \$100.8 million for up to 10 additional Medicare-subsidised psychological therapy sessions each year for patients with a Mental Health Treatment Plan, on-top of the 10 sessions previously available.

The Department of Health has advised that this measure expands the Better Access Pandemic Support measure implemented on 7 August 2020, to provide up to 10 additional psychological therapy sessions each year under the Better Access Initiative to be available nationally to all eligible Australians.

The additional sessions will be available each calendar year until 30 June 2022 for Australians who:

- have a Mental Health Treatment Plan;
- have used all 10 initial sessions in the calendar year that they seek a referral for additional sessions; and
- receive a referral for an additional number of sessions from their reviewing GP, psychiatrist or paediatrician (reviewing practitioner).

To facilitate provision of this additional support, the items that were created for the Better Access Pandemic Support measure will now be available until 30 June 2022.

### Enhancing suicide prevention and continuing support

#### Prioritising Mental Health — continued support

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Health	7.1	-	-	-
Department of Social Services	5.4	13.3	13.4	13.6
Total — Payments	12.6	13.3	13.4	13.6

The Government will provide an additional \$62.1 million over four years from 2020-21 (including \$0.6 million per year ongoing) to improve access to mental health services, including:

- \$45.7 million over four years from 2020-21 to expand the Individual Placement and Support program under the Youth Employment Strategy to assist vulnerable young people with mental illness to participate in the workforce
- \$6.9 million over two years from 2020-21 to support digital mental health services including the Australian Government's mental health gateway Head to Health
- \$5.0 million in 2020-21 to provide parents, guardians and carers with mental health and career information for students in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic
- \$2.3 million over four years from 2020-21 to enhance the national headspace network by upgrading the Mount Barker service in South Australia to a full centre
- \$2.1 million in 2020-21 for the Prevention Hub led by the Black Dog Institute and Everymind to continue to advance research that targets people at heightened risk of mental ill health and suicide.

Partial funding for this measure has already been provided for by the Government.



## Private Health Insurance changes – access to community based mental health care

### Supporting Our Hospitals — simpler and more affordable private health cover for all Australians

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Health	5.8	-10.0	-12.5	-14.2
<i>Related receipts (\$m)</i>				
Australian Taxation Office	-	-5.0	-20.0	-25.0

The Government will provide \$19.5 million over four years from 2020-21 to improve the access and affordability of Private Health Insurance. This includes making home and community-based care more accessible through Private Health Insurance commencing with mental health and general rehabilitation services. Formal consultation on implementation will commence with the sector in October 2020.

## COVID-19 response – supporting mental health

### COVID-19 Response Package — supporting mental health

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Health	43.9	54.4	1.8	-
Services Australia	0.3	0.4	-	-
Total — Payments	44.2	54.8	1.8	-

The Australian Government reports that it has invested \$165.9 million in mental health as part of the COVID-19 response since March 2020. Mental Health Australia understands that the following measures form part of this investment however, due to a lack of transparency in budget papers it is difficult to determine the exact measures being referred to.

The Government has also invested in several initiatives to enable ongoing access to primary care, including the \$2.4 billion package to provide Medicare-subsidised telehealth and reports providing support for frontline health workers, older Australians, young people, new parents, and Indigenous Australians with an investment of \$45.6m.

## COVID-19 response package — prioritising mental health and preventive health

### COVID-19 Response Package — prioritising mental health and preventive health

Payment (\$m)	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Health	22.9	81.9	-6.3	-	-
Australian Bureau of Statistics	-	0.8	0.5	-	-
Services Australia	-	-	-	-	-
Total — Payment	22.9	82.6	-5.8	-	-

The Government will provide \$122.1 million over three years from 2019-20 to support implementation of the National Mental Health and Wellbeing Pandemic Response Plan and the mental health of Australians during the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding for this measure will be partly met from within the existing resources of the Department of Health, and Services Australia. This measure includes:

- \$49.6 million over two years from 2019-20 for targeted support for vulnerable groups to address emerging gaps in mental health services, such as social isolation and anxiety, due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- \$28.4 million in 2020-21 to support clients of community mental health programs who are yet to transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme for a further 12 months



- \$24.0 million over two years from 2019-20 for Beyond Blue to establish a dedicated counselling and support line for people experiencing stress and anxiety due to COVID-19, and for additional support for services such as Lifeline Australia and Kids Helpline
- \$11.8 million over two years from 2019-20 to deliver a national mental health communication campaign and enhancements to the Head to Health website
- \$4.7 million over two years from 2019-20 to extend the Suicide Prevention Research Fund and National Gateway to Best Practice and Quality Improvement project for a further 12 months to 30 June 2021
- \$3.6 million over two years from 2020-21 to establish a national reporting dashboard to monitor mental health services, and develop pathways for crisis support services to better engage with mental health services.

### COVID-19 response package — additional mental health and crisis support for Victoria

The Government will provide \$47.3 million over two years from 2020-21 in additional mental health and crisis support services for people experiencing mental illness and distress as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in Victoria, including:

- \$26.9 million in 2020-21 to establish 15 enhanced mental health clinics within six Primary Health Networks, to provide immediate coordinated mental health care
- \$7.0 million for Beyond Blue, Lifeline and Kids Helpline to expand capacity to manage increased demand for crisis support services in Victoria
- \$5.0 million in 2020-21 to support digital and telephone services for vulnerable populations including new and expecting parents, people with eating disorders and culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- \$5.0 million in 2020-21 for headspace to increase outreach services to young people in the community who are in severe distress
- \$3.4 million over two years from 2020-21 to undertake an evaluation of these initiatives, and to provide additional support to the Victorian Mental Health Taskforce.

This measure builds on the July 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update measure titled COVID-19 Response Package — prioritising mental health and preventive health.

### COVID-19 response package – supporting the mental health of Australians in small businesses

The Government will provide \$7 million to support the mental health and financial wellbeing of small businesses impacted by COVID-19. This funding is for one year only in 2020-21 and includes:

- \$4.3 million to provide free, accessible and tailored support for small business owners by expanding Beyond Blue's NewAccess program in partnership with the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman
- \$2.2 million to expand a free accredited professional development program that builds the mental health literacy of trusted business advisers so they can better support small business owners in times of distress, delivered through Deakin University.

### Supporting bushfire, flood, and drought affected communities

Includes \$50.3m to support people affected by bushfires through funding for trauma response co-ordinators, trauma care training and expansion of mental health services and community grants for bushfire-affected areas, and telehealth services. The Government will also provide funding for immediate frontline emergency counselling and hotlines (\$10.5m).

The Government is supporting communities hit by the unprecedented 2019-20 bushfires through the \$2 billion National Bushfire Recovery Fund (NBRF). \$1.2 billion of the NBRF has been spent as at 31 August 2020, assisting with economic, community and industry recovery and resilience.



Through the National Drought and North Queensland Flood Response and Recovery Agency, the Government is providing \$2 million over four years from 2020-21 for preventative mental health measures for children in flood-affected areas, plus \$20 million over four years from 2020-21 to support locally-led recovery and resilience activities.

## Adult Mental Health Centres

The Australian Government will provide \$12 million over three years from 2021-22 to establish an Adult Mental Health Centre in Adelaide. The Centre will provide a range of mental health support services.

## Mental health support for veterans and their families payments

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Veterans' Affairs	12.7	28.4	29.7	30.7
Services Australia	0.1	-	-	-
<b>Total — Payments</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>29.7</b>	<b>30.7</b>

The Government will provide \$101.7 million over four years from 2020-21 for veterans' mental health support and services. Funding includes:

- a one-off increase to the fees paid to the Department of Veterans' Affairs mental health, social work and community nursing providers and a simplified fee structure for these services
- an additional 10 specialist psychiatry training places each year for psychiatrists to specialise in veterans' mental health care
- expanding the Open Arms' Veterans and Families Counselling Community and Peer program, in addition to developing and implementing an outcomes monitoring framework to monitor and assess Open Arms' services
- expanding digital mental health capabilities through a pilot of web-based forums for veterans and their families, improving access to support for those in regional and remote locations
- extending the Coordinated Veterans' Care program to eligible White Card Holders with an accepted mental health condition.

## Transitioning to civilian life

The Government will provide \$17.7 million over four years from 2020-21 (and \$4.4 million per year ongoing) to establish a Joint Transition Authority (JTA) within the Department of Defence to better support Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and their families as they transition from military to civilian life. The JTA will coordinate and provide support programs and services, to ensure ADF personnel are connected with appropriate supports through their transition to post-military life. This measure will implement a key recommendation of the Productivity Commission's A Better Way to Support Veterans Report.

The Government will also provide \$6 million to continue the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program, which promotes the wide ranging skills of our ADF personnel to employers and rewards businesses for initiatives that support veteran employment.



## Veteran Wellbeing Centre Program

### Veteran Wellbeing Centre Program

\$million	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
2020-21	-	-	3.0	-	2.1	-	-	-	5.1
2021-22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2022-23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2023-24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	-	<b>3.0</b>	-	<b>2.1</b>	-	-	-	<b>5.1</b>

The Australian Government is providing funding to develop a network of six Veteran Wellbeing Centres across Australia in partnership with Ex-Service Organisations and state and territory governments.



## Appendix 2 - Measures across the social determinants of mental health

### Health

#### Guaranteeing Medicare – Medicare Benefits Schedule review

##### Guaranteeing Medicare – Medicare Benefits Schedule review

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Health	15.3	-3.1	-10.0	-9.4
Department of Veterans' Affairs	0.1	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2
Services Australia	..	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3
Total — Payments	15.4	-3.6	-10.5	-9.9

The Government will provide \$17.3 million over two years from 2020-21 to continue implementation of recommendations from the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Review Taskforce to ensure patient safety and high quality care.

#### People affected by stillbirth

The Government will provide \$7.6 million over four years from 2020-21 (and \$1.2 million per year ongoing) to address inconsistencies in the support provided for families affected by stillbirth or by the loss of a child before their first birthday. This measure continues the support provided by the Government for people affected by perinatal mental health challenges in the 2019-20 Budget.

### Safety

#### Additional funding for domestic and family violence support

The Government will provide funding over four years from 2020-21 to deliver Australia's sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service provided through 1800RESPECT, to provide COVID-specific advertising over the 2020-21 Christmas/New Year period, and to meet increased demand.

#### Future National Redress Scheme funding payments

The Government will provide an additional \$104.6 million over four years from 2020-21 to support the delivery of the National Redress Scheme and to support Independent Decision Makers in offering Redress. This is in response to reports that the scheme is not providing payments quickly enough.

#### National Memorial for victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse

The Government will provide \$6.7 million over four years from 2020-21 to establish a National Memorial for victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse. This measure fulfils a recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.



## Disability

### National Disability Insurance Scheme

The Government is providing a further \$3.9 billion to the NDIS. This extra funding ensures Australians eligible for the NDIS have access to the supports they need now and into the future. This \$3.9 billion investment reflects the growth of the NDIS as it is continued to be rolled out throughout Australia.

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
National Disability Insurance Scheme Launch Transition Agency	255.4	191.6	142.1	-
NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission	28.6	23.2	20.1	21.1
<b>Total — Payments</b>	<b>284.0</b>	<b>214.8</b>	<b>162.1</b>	<b>21.1</b>
<i>Related receipts (\$m)</i>				
<i>National Disability Insurance Scheme Launch Transition Agency</i>	<i>-35.2</i>	<i>-40.1</i>	<i>-41.4</i>	<i>-</i>

The Government will provide the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) \$589.1 million over 2020–21 to 2022–23 to support the continued implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). It will also provide the National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality and Safeguards Commission \$93 million over four years from 2020-21 to improve the quality and safety of the NDIS and expand its compliance and investigative capacity into disability services.

### Australia's Care and Support Workforce Package

The Government will provide \$19.8 million over three years from 2020-21 for this measure, including: provision of market demand and supply information, broadening the scope of the Boosting the Local Care Workforce program and extending it to 30 June 2023, attracting workers to a career in the broader care and support sector by expanding the scope of the NDIS Jobs and Market Fund communications campaign, and identifying opportunities for regulatory alignment and reducing the administrative burden for the care and support workforce.

### Worker Mobility Reduction Payment initiative

The Government will provide up to \$7.5 million in 2020-21 for a Worker Mobility Reduction Payment, forming part of a \$15 million joint initiative with the Victorian Government. This initiative will enable disability residential service providers to implement worker mobility restrictions (where possible) to help prevent the spread of infection in disability residential facilities. The cost of this measure will be met from within the existing resources of the National Disability Insurance Agency. This measure was announced on 4 September 2020.

## Access to aged care supports

This Budget provides \$1.6 billion for an additional 23,000 home care packages. This record investment is extremely welcome, but still leaves an estimated 75,000 older Australians on the wait list for home care packages without a clear plan to reduce wait times.<sup>8</sup>

The Budget also provides a further \$11.3 million investment to deliver and meet demand for face-to-face, video and telephone dementia support services across aged care. This measure is intended to provide

<sup>8</sup> COTA Australia (2020, 6 October). Budget delivers some good news for older Australians, but other things are missing [Media release]. Retrieved 13 October 2020 from <https://www.cota.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/COTA-2011-MR-Federal-Budget-Response-2020-21-6-Oct-20.pdf>.



additional support for carers of people experiencing behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia through increased psychosocial support services across the health and aged care sectors.

## Financial security

### Further economic support payments

The Government will provide \$2.6 billion over three years from 2020-21 to provide two separate \$250 economic support payments, to be made from November 2020 and early 2021 to eligible recipients of the following payments and health care card holders: Age Pension, Disability Support Pension, Carer Payment, Family Tax Benefit, Carer Allowance, Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holders, Commonwealth Seniors Health Card holders, eligible Veterans' Affairs payment recipients and concession card holders.

## Employment

### JobMaker Hiring Credit

The JobMaker Hiring Credit is intended to support young people to get back into work during the economic recovery. Employers who create a new job over the next 12 months from 7 October 2020 for which they hire an eligible young job seeker will be able to receive a \$200 a week credit (if the employee is 16 to 29yo) or \$100 a week (if the employee is 30 to 35yo). Young people must have received JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance (Other) or Parenting Payment for at least one of the previous three months at the time of hiring to be eligible. The Government expects around 450,000 positions to be supported through the JobMaker Hiring Credit, at an estimated cost of \$4 billion from 2020-21 to 2022-23.

## Education

### Higher education – additional support for students and education providers

The Government will provide an additional \$903.5 million over four years from 2020-21 to provide more places and support for people wanting to access higher education due to the impact of COVID-19, which includes creating disciplines of Professional Pathway Psychology and Professional Pathway Social Work to reduce the student contribution amounts for students studying units as part of a pathway to professional qualifications.

### Students Support Package

#### Students Support Package

##### Payments (\$m)

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Education, Skills and Employment	16.6	25.0	42.0	44.0
National Indigenous Australians Agency	1.3	3.8	2.6	-
<b>Total — Payments</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>44.6</b>	<b>44.0</b>

The Government will provide \$146.3 million over five years from 2020-21 for a package of initiatives to improve education outcomes of young Australians, particularly disadvantaged students and those most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and to contribute to social cohesion.

The package includes: \$38.2 million over four years from 2020-21 for The Smith Family to support around 76,000 disadvantaged young Australians to complete Year 12 and move into work, training or further study.



# Mental Health Australia



Mentally healthy people,  
mentally healthy communities

Mental Health Australia is the peak independent national representative body of the mental health sector in Australia.

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