

Tuesday, 17 November 2020

RECORD \$2.4 BILLION INVESTMENT FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACROSS THE STATE

The NSW Government will invest a record \$2.4 billion into mental health services this year to continue to support people across the State as part of the 2020-21 NSW Budget.

Treasurer Dominic Perrottet and Minister for Mental Health Bronnie Taylor said the funding would ensure quality services were available for the people of NSW.

“This record Budget will allow a range of initiatives to support mental health and wellbeing right across the state,” Mr Perrottet said.

“We want to ensure that people doing it tough continue to have access to timely, world-class care no matter where they live.

“The NSW Government is committed to building a better NSW, which is only possible by investing in our people and our future.”

Mrs Taylor said that in an extraordinarily challenging year with drought, bushfires and the pandemic, it had been vital that mental health care remain at the forefront of the Budget.

“This record budget will provide care at every point in someone’s struggle with mental health, whether it be general wellbeing, prevention of a mental illness, right through to major crisis,” Mrs Taylor said.

“The Budget delivers ground-breaking, innovative programs looking at different models of care and early intervention, such as the school wellbeing nurses program.

“If we can give a Year 8 student who is feeling overwhelmed the right skills and tools to cope during tough times, then we build their resilience and hopefully avoid a mental health issue developing.

“We are investing in evidence-based programs like the ground-breaking PACER model, which embeds mental health experts with police and ambulance workers and allows them to provide advice and more appropriate care at the scene.”

Key highlights in the mental health budget include:

- **Almost \$47 million** over four years to support student wellbeing by recruiting an additional 100 wellbeing and in-reach nurses in vulnerable regions to provide wellbeing and health checks and referrals in schools;
- **\$6 million** over three years to establish 12 Mental Health and Community Wellbeing Collaboratives across the state;

- **More than \$66 million** in 2020-21 providing additional mental health clinicians and peer workers; expanding the Police Ambulance and Clinical Early Response (PACER) model; enhancing therapeutic activities in inpatient units; increasing capacity and responsiveness of the Mental Health line; and expanding virtual mental health services;
- **More than \$66 million** over three years beginning in 2021-22 to continue the additional specialist mental health clinicians to significantly enhance the capacity of community mental health services to appropriately manage mental health clients in the community; and
- **More than \$50 million** over three years beginning 2021-22 to provide technology and expanding telehealth services to enable more access to mental health support for people in immediate crisis in both metropolitan and regional NSW.

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