

2021–22 Federal Budget

Mental health initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

To be effective, mental health supports must be considerate of diverse experiences, cultures and environments that may make some people more susceptible to mental ill-health and suicide. Recognising that a one size fits all approach is not suitable, mental health services need to be accessible for those who are seeking support.

There is enormous wisdom in the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities approach issues of social and emotional wellbeing. Therefore, it's appropriate that we support Indigenous-led organisations to drive culturally-appropriate responses. One such response announced in this budget is the partnership between Gayaa Dhuwi and Lifeline to provide a 24/7 Crisis Line.

We encourage you to read the full mental health and suicide prevention budget available on our website to appreciate the following information in context.

Key budget initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples:

- **\$79 million** investment in key initiatives under a renewed Indigenous-led National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy, including:
 - **\$27.3 million** to implement culturally-sensitive, co-designed aftercare services through regionally-based organisations, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations being preferred service providers,
 - **\$23.8 million** to support the establishment of regional suicide prevention networks and a lead commissioning officer in each jurisdiction,
 - **\$16.6 million** to Gayaa Dhuwi and Lifeline to establish and evaluate a culturally appropriate 24/7 crisis line to be governed and delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,

In the 2014-15 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, almost a third (29%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members self-reported a mental health condition. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience rates of suicide that are twice as high as their non-Indigenous counterparts.



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- **\$6 million** to support national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership for suicide prevention,
- **\$12 million** to maintain support to the former National Suicide Prevention Trial sites to continue delivery of local suicide prevention initiatives across Australia. Commencing in 2016, the Trial funded Public Health Networks to develop and implement a local, systems-based approach to suicide prevention for at-risk populations (including Aboriginal communities) in 12 regions across Australia with high rates of suicide.
- **\$1.5 million** to support a review to examine the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector delivering mental health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,
- **\$1 million** to the Black Dog Institute to work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lived Experience Centre to support the inclusion of people with lived experience in the co-design, implementation and evaluation of suicide prevention activity.

Some of the key Budget initiatives for:

- **\$117.2 million** to establish a comprehensive evidence base to support real time monitoring and data collection for Australia's mental health and suicide prevention systems. This includes: enhancing national data systems and filling information gaps, monitoring population risk of suicide and self-harm, funding to enhance forecasting of population mental health need, and to develop a nationally agreed framework for mental health regional planning, developing a national evaluation strategy and evaluation fund, funding for a longitudinal child mental health and wellbeing study, and measuring, for the first time, the prevalence of mental health in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.
- **\$58.8 million** for growing and upskilling the mental health workforce, critical measures including:
 - **\$8.3 million** to support greater representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the mental health workforce through additional mental health-specific scholarships and provide training to support healthcare workers to deliver culturally safe care,
 - **\$11 million** to boost the psychiatrist workforce by increasing the number of training places available, including in regional and remote areas,
 - **\$27.8 million** to increase the number of nurses, psychologists and allied health practitioners working in mental health settings through 280 scholarships and 350 clinical placements,



- **\$3.1 million** to sponsor up to 390 peer workers to undertake vocational training,
- **\$0.3 million** to identify opportunities to boost the skills of those who work with children and families,
- **\$1 million** to reduce the stigma associated with mental health among health practitioners, and promote mental health as a preferred career option,
- **\$2.4 million** to continue mental health training for practitioners working in aged care and support professional collaboration through the Mental Health Professionals' Network.

National FREE 24/7 Crisis Services

[Lifeline](tel:131114) | 13 11 14

[Suicide Call Back Service](tel:1300659467) | 1300 659 467

[Kids Helpline](tel:1800551800) | 1800 55 1800

[Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service](tel:1800512348) | 1800 512 348

[Beyond Blue](tel:1300224636) | 1300 22 4636

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