

# Strengthening mental health care in NSW

## A once in a generation overhaul of mental health care service delivery.

**The NSW Government has committed to a once in a generation overhaul of mental health care service delivery, with a \$115 million boost to mental health funding over three years.**

A key commitment of the Government is improving the wellbeing of the community and ensuring better outcomes for people with mental illness, their families and carers. Already there has been record spending on mental health. New and expanded services have been developed with investment in much needed infrastructure.

Under the Government commitment there will be a major focus on enhancing services in the community. Inpatient acute mental health services will also be supported and grow in line with community needs.

A key Government priority was establishment of the first Mental Health Commission of NSW.

Tasked with developing a strategic plan, the Commission embarked on two years of consultation and research with contributions from over 2100 consumers, clients, health professionals and community members through forums and workshops. The final Commission document *Living Well, A Strategic Plan for Mental Health in NSW 2014-2024* provides a ten year roadmap for strengthening mental health care in NSW.

The additional \$115 million investment over three years will support implementation of the roadmap with Government action focussed on five key areas.

Strengthening mental health care in NSW over the next ten years will mean:

- ▶ More support for staying well and at home as community mental health services are enhanced, and unnecessary hospital stays reduced
- ▶ More people with mental illness and disorders able to access care
- ▶ Services oriented around individual patients, carers and families to help people live better lives in the community or other care settings
- ▶ Mental health services that provide a better balance of acute care and community-based services.
- ▶ A focus on high quality acute and long-stay care to ensure people with complex needs are supported through targeted and specialised services.

The Government will work in partnership with the community-managed and private sectors to ensure that all programs and services will be better integrated.

## Strengthening prevention and early intervention

Creating communities and environments that value wellbeing and nurture good mental health is essential for strengthening mental health care in NSW.

Schools play a critical and pivotal role in helping children and young people make sense of the world around them. It is a shared responsibility between parents, teachers and community members to equip children and young people for the opportunities and challenges they face as they develop and grow.

### Wellbeing in schools

The NSW Department of Education and Communities is addressing wellbeing in schools. This will be a holistic approach to supporting the wellbeing of students and will assist schools to implement whole-school approaches to wellbeing.

A key aspect will be effective coordinated wellbeing service delivery for students with complex social and emotional issues. Through initiatives such as the Networked Specialist Centres, public schools will have access to a cascade of services supporting universal prevention to acute intervention.

### School Link Coordinators

**The number of School Link Coordinators will be increased from 15 to 18** to help create stronger links between new Department of Education and Communities' Networked Specialist Centres, schools and clinical mental health services in the community.



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## A greater focus on community-based care

In 2012-13, over 129,000 people in NSW received a specialist mental health service either within a hospital or in the community. Community and mental health services will be improved and expanded to ensure flexible and responsive support services can be provided to people with mental illness in community settings.

### Increasing specialist clinical mental health services in the community

**People with severe and complex mental illness will receive up to 15 per cent more hours of specialist clinical mental health support in the community.**

Specialist mental health clinical services provide continuing care in the community. These services assess people and their families following referral by family, friends or other services and agencies such as emergency departments, GPs, schools, nursing homes and justice services.

**The number of Whole Family Teams will be enhanced with three additional teams to be established.**

Whole of Family Teams provide specialist mental health, drug and alcohol and parenting interventions in the home. These interventions can result in improvements in psychological distress, reductions in tobacco and alcohol consumption, and improvements in family functioning.

**Access to crisis and triage will be enhanced in regional NSW.**

A new 24/7 mental health resource hub will be established with mental health professionals to support health workers in northern NSW. The hub will offer rapid and safe mental health assessment and consultation support, delivered remotely through video conferencing technology.

**24/7**

**Mental health resource hub** will be established to support health workers in northern NSW.

**Specialist perinatal and infant mental health (PIMH) services will be enhanced to support 200 more (to a total of 800) mothers with severe and complex mental illness each year.**

Specialist PIMH services allow mothers to be cared for in the community with their children and families, where possible. This avoids the need for hospitalisation and reduces their length of stay.

**Community Integration Teams will be maintained to provide more than 9000 hours of support to around 500 young people moving from custody to the community.**

These Teams have a large focus on young Aboriginal people with mental health and drug and alcohol issues. They will provide integrated, ongoing care after release from custody in order to help young people successfully reintegrate into the community.

## Expanding psychosocial community living supports

The type of support that people with severe mental illness may need in order to live in the community includes psychosocial support related to self care, counselling and advocacy, vocational services, community participation activities, and safe and stable accommodation.

**The number of adults receiving community living supports will be increased to around 1850 to assist people with severe mental illness to continue to live in the community.**

The program will provide more flexibility by focusing on individuals and their changing needs over time, rather than standalone support packages.



**Community living supports will be expanded for young people with serious mental illness to help reduce the amount of time they spend in hospital.**

This involves building on the highly successful Young People's Outreach Program with an additional four sites that provide practical assistance in developing living skills, accessing education and training, improving relationships with family and friends and linking to other services including income support and recreation activities.

**The LikeMind integrated community mental health service hubs will be expanded to four trial sites.**

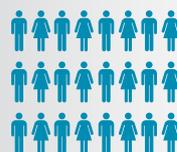
LikeMind is a pilot of a new model of community-based, co-located health service, including integrated mental health care, which is currently being established in two sites. LikeMind is expected to enhance the delivery of mental health services in the non-government sector.

**Supports for mothers with mental illness and their children will be maintained.**

This will provide short-term, non-acute accommodation with mental health and parenting care, as well as specialist care provided in a person's home where they already have one.

## Assisting long-term patients to live in the community

Everyone has a right to live in a community setting. People with enduring and severe mental illness experience better quality of life and improved social outcomes if they can maintain living in the community.



New community residential options will be designed for **380 people** currently receiving long-term hospital care.

New community residential options will continue to be designed for the 380 people currently receiving long-term hospital care in non-acute and acute units in NSW. Each long-stay patient will be clinically assessed and staff will work with each and every person to create a plan based on their individual needs.

Mental health care in hospital settings will be available for people who require high levels of clinical and disability support where community-based care does not meet their needs.

## Developing a more responsive system

### Strengthening specialist support for people with complex needs

People with complex needs, such as people with borderline personality disorders and those with mental health and drug and alcohol addiction, require specialist mental health supports.

Current initiatives targeted at these priority groups will be further developed through consultation with staff and community groups.

**Project Air, a targeted service development, training and evaluation program for health workers will be expanded.**

This will continue to help ensure people with borderline personality disorder have better access to integrated care.

**Consultation liaison services will be enhanced in four priority major hospitals** to enable better management of mental health issues for both emergency departments and general hospital patients.

## Working together to deliver person-centred care

### Local innovation and performance

An Innovation Fund will be introduced to promote improved collaboration among health, mental health and frontline human and criminal justice services to deliver person-centred care, particularly at local levels. The Fund will encourage flexibility, innovation and service integration as well as shared accountability for outcomes. It will also help reduce duplication, better prioritise services and highlight efficiencies.

## Building a better system

### Investing in research

Coordinating and prioritising research will improve models of care, pioneer new approaches that lead to better outcomes, and enhance policy development that improves service design.

Networks established by the Agency for Clinical Innovation for mental health and drug and alcohol will focus on research and evaluation, develop practice guidelines and information bulletins, and promote professional development activities.

### Investing in workforce

A skilled and sustainable workforce is at the heart of the long-term plan to strengthen mental health care in NSW.

A Mental Health Workforce Plan will support collaborative approaches to building capacity in the general health workforce, frontline agencies and community-managed mental health sector.

#### KEY FACTS

- > Forty five per cent of Australians will be affected by mental illness at some point in their life.
- > Half of all mental illnesses manifest before the age of 14 and three quarters by the age of 25.
- > Nine thousand people are admitted to NSW hospitals for intentional self-harm each year.
- > Suicide is the leading cause of death in Australia for people aged between 15 and 34 years.
- > Psychiatric disorders reduce life expectancy - for men by about 16 years and women by about 12 years.

Source: *Living Well: A Strategic Plan for Mental Health in NSW 2014-2024*. Mental Health Commission of NSW, 2014.

## Mental health care already in focus

These Government actions come at a time of record spending on mental health by the NSW Government. While some actions can be implemented immediately, others will require more dialogue with staff and the community.

**32%**

increase in  
funding since  
2010-11

Since 2010-11, the Government has increased direct recurrent expenditure in mental health by over **32 per cent** to a record **\$1.6 billion** in the 2014-15 financial year.

Recent achievements have improved services and set the foundation to strengthen mental health care in NSW.

### A greater focus on community-based care

- ▶ Invested \$40.7 million in 2014-15 to deliver 1135 supported accommodation packages to people with mental illness through the Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative's (HASI) General HASI, Aboriginal HASI and HASI in the Home streams.



Invested **\$40.7 million** in 2014-15 to deliver **1135 supported accommodation packages**.

### Strengthening prevention and early intervention

- ▶ Committed \$3.4 million a year to deliver enhanced treatment options for children and adolescents by establishing three trial assertive outreach teams in Southern NSW, Nepean Blue Mountains and Northern Sydney Local Health Districts to deliver home-based treatment and other support



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- ▶ Launched Conversations Matter, a suite of practical online resources developed to support communities and professionals to guide discussions about suicide and self-harm, the first of its kind internationally
- ▶ Getting On Track In Time (Got It!) school-based early intervention pilot sites in operation in Mount Druitt, Dubbo and Newcastle.

### Developing a more responsive system

- ▶ Enhanced treatment options for people with borderline personality disorder and their families and carers through the successful three-year Project Air Strategy pilot
- ▶ Delivered the state-wide 24/7 NSW Mental Health Line (1800 011 511) to ensure people are directed to the right professional care for them, at any time



Delivered the state-wide **NSW Mental Health Line 1800 011 511 24/7**.

- ▶ Provided \$2 million a year to enhance the critical services provided by Lifeline to people in crisis.

### Working together to deliver person-centred care

- ▶ Launched the State's first Eating Disorders Plan, which provides \$15.2 million over five years to ensure treatment for more clients
- ▶ Committed \$5.4 million over three years for two trial sites for the LikeMind integrated service model, which will co-locate physical health services, mental health services and psychosocial supports.

### Building a better system

- ▶ Provided \$800,000 to help establish a Mental Health Clinical Academic Research Program aimed at developing potential researchers to increase the capacity for mental health research
- ▶ Provided \$500,000 to enhance the Schizophrenia Research Chair and program dedicated to discovering ways to prevent and cure schizophrenia.



**Health**

**More Information**

Available at [www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth)

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