

NSW Budget 2024-25

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NSW Budget: Support for community mental health

The Minns Labor Government is delivering a suite of initiatives to support community mental health and wellbeing by increasing the essential help available to the people NSW during times of distress.

Over 2 in 5 Australians aged 16 to 85 are estimated to have experienced a mental disorder at some point in their life and we know we need to provide better support so they can live healthy and happy lives.

The 2024-2025 NSW Budget invests in building better, more accessible mental health services for the people of NSW.

Building a better Community Mental Health system

The NSW Government is investing **\$30.4 million** to expand Community Mental Health Teams across targeted areas, including in regional NSW.

These teams work within Local Health Districts and specialty health networks caring for those who experience persistent and complex mental illness.

This funding will provide a workforce boost of approximately 35 additional mental health positions, which will support community outreach, allow for extended hours of service and enable more comprehensive case management.

The 35 additional mental health professionals will include five out-reach mental health housing liaison positions who will work with the Department of Communities and Justice to link people at risk of, or experiencing homelessness, who are accessing mental health services to housing and help them sustain tenancies.

The St Vincent's Health network will also be allocated five workers to establish a new assertive adult community mental health team.

This will allow them to increase their support for those facing complex needs, including those experiencing homelessness, substance misuse issues and those at risk of engagement with the criminal justice system.

Building better pathways to community living

This Budget also delivers **\$40 million** for the Pathways to Community Living Initiative, which is focused on supporting alternatives to long term hospital care for people with complex needs, who have persistent mental illness.

This will fund a complex care clinical workforce of over 25 professionals who will support patients through this program.

Building a single front door for better mental health support

The NSW Government is investing an additional **\$39 million** to strengthen mental health services by establishing a new Mental Health Single Front Door.

The NSW Single Front Door, delivered through Healthdirect, currently provides virtual GP, virtual KIDS and Urgent Care Services.

Following this investment, this service will expand to include mental health support, allowing those in need to call Healthdirect to receive assessment advice from specialist clinicians and be connected with the appropriate services.

This initiative has been developed in consultation with carers, mental health professionals, a range of service providers, and those who may use the service.

By providing callers with information on alternative care pathways, the establishment of a Mental Health Single Front Door will also reduce avoidable Emergency Department presentations and improve patient flow across hospitals.

Providing critical support for the Mental Health Review Tribunal

The Mental Health Review Tribunal will receive an additional **\$2.4 million** to enable a long overdue digitisation of records, an upgrade to IT systems and an investment in a new case management system.

These system improvements will support the Tribunal to meet the continued growth in patients and hearings.

Our plan to build a better NSW

Since being elected the Minns Labor Government has been working on a comprehensive plan to strengthen our mental health system.

We know it faces significant challenges, but we are making the responsible decisions to ensure the people of NSW have the care and services they deserve and need.

We want a fully staffed mental health care system that is responsive, well-resourced and properly supports our community.

It is part of our plan to build a better NSW.

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