

Media release:
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Budget first step towards better mental health for Australians

Wellways welcomes the continued focus on mental health, as well as the Government's acknowledgment of the impact of the pandemic on the wellbeing of Australians.

Last night's Budget showed positive commitment to improving the mental health and wellbeing of Australians, with funding allocated to increasing the availability of mental health support and preventing suicide in our communities.

Whilst the mental health announcement is a step in the right direction, Wellways believes the Government could have gone further.

Wellways CEO Laura Collister welcomed the Government's significant investment towards mental health supports, including suicide prevention in this year's Budget.

"It is essential communities have the capacity to respond to people affected by suicide and we're excited to see investment for whole-of-population suicide prevention activities and further funding to support those bereaved by suicide," Ms Collister said.

"The Government's commitment to further funding to support informal carers of older Australians is also a welcome addition to the support we already provide to unpaid carers through the Government's Carer Gateway, a service provided by Wellways in Queensland and the New South Wales regions of South West Sydney and Nepean Blue Mountains," said Ms Collister.

Wellways, like so many in the community mental health sector, has been waiting in anticipation for the Government to reveal in the Budget which of the Productivity Commission's mental health recommendations will be adopted and funded.

"Whilst last night's Budget provided some clarity, we believe there is still more to be done," said Ms Collister.

"The Productivity Commission identified a gap in availability of psychosocial support due to insufficient funding and I am encouraged by the Government's commitment to continuing to provide psychosocial support services, but more is needed.

"It is essential that reforms occurring in the States and Territories, for example Victoria, are harmonised with yesterday's budget announcements. Without a consistent approach, the fractures in the existing system will widen.

"We will continue to advocate for more services in the community, so that people can get the right care, in the right place when they need it," said Ms Collister.

This Budget is a step in the right direction, but it remains to be seen whether it is the step-change Australians need to remedy the longstanding gaps identified by several inquiries.

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About [Wellways Australia](#)

Wellways Australia is a leading for-purpose mental health and community services organisation dedicated to ensuring all Australians lead active and fulfilling lives in their community. We work with people with mental health challenges, people living with disability, carers, those requiring community care and others facing disadvantage to help them create the life they want to live.

We have a commitment to ensuring that all the people we serve have opportunities to fully participate in the community, and we actively work to build communities that seek out and welcome the participation of everyone. Community inclusion underpins all our efforts as an organisation.

We advocate for policy change to make sure people can access the best possible care and information when they need it. We recognise for people to succeed there needs to be equitable access to services and supports for all and the elimination of barriers to community participation, including stigma and systemic discrimination.