

Mental health, alcohol and drug services State Budget funding boost

Thursday, 8 October 2020

More than a billion dollars per annum allocated to mental health, alcohol and other drug services

Record \$306 million additional funding towards mental health services as part of the 2020-21 State Budget

Key funding boosts to increasing accommodation and suicide prevention services

For the first time, more than a billion dollars per annum has been allocated to mental health, alcohol and other drug services for Western Australians.

The 2020-21 State Budget has allocated \$1.013 billion to the Mental Health Commission to support services for all Western Australians, a 7.5 per cent increase from the last budget.

This includes \$46.9 million for suicide prevention programs and initiatives. Suicide affects the whole community, and a whole-of-community approach is required to prevent it. The McGowan Government is committed to supporting the Western Australian community to reduce deaths by suicide. An important component is \$9.77 million for Aboriginal regional suicide prevention plans in each region of WA, prioritising Aboriginal-led and locally endorsed initiatives.

Key initiatives from the McGowan Government's A Safe Place strategy have also been funded to deliver new community-based accommodation services:

\$25.1 million for a new 16-bed youth mental health, alcohol and other drug homelessness service in the Perth metropolitan area; and

\$24.5 million to establish a 20-bed adult community care unit, to provide high-level support and rehabilitation services in a home-like environment in the community.

During COVID-19, wellbeing was highlighted as an issue that is more important than ever.

As part of the McGowan Government's response to the pandemic funding has been allocated help support people already accessing mental health, alcohol and other drug services and help services adjust to the new environment, and maintain the infection control standards required during the pandemic.

An additional \$62.8 million has been allocated for mental health hospital services in the public health system to manage demand, in addition to \$24.4 million for the expansion of mental health facilities at Fremantle Hospital.

The McGowan Government is also upgrading vital alcohol and other drug support and treatment facilities throughout WA, which will provide local jobs, with \$2.35 million over two years as part of the WA Recovery Plan. This includes the Next Step Drug and Alcohol

Services, Midland Intervention Centre and community sobering up centres in Roebourne, Carnarvon, Wyndham, Halls Creek and Fitzroy Crossing

Since 2017, the McGowan Government has made substantial progress on the establishment of regional community mental health Step Up/Step Down services with \$87.6 million in capital and operational funding committed up to 2023-24 and includes:

- Albany - opened November 2018;
- Bunbury - opened March 2020;
- Kalgoorlie - opening early 2021;
- Geraldton - opening early 2021; and
- Karratha - expected to open late 2021.

Other key mental health initiatives undertaken and progressed include:

- Established WA's State-wide Recovery College for mental health and wellbeing;
- \$322.2 million to address methamphetamine issues in WA;
- \$1.1 million for the establishment of a Great Southern Needle and Syringe Exchange Program;
- \$14.7 million for an Alcohol and Other Drug Residential Rehabilitation and Treatment Service in the South-West;
- \$27.1 million for the North West Drug and Alcohol Support Program to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and other drugs in the Mid-West, Pilbara and Kimberley;
- \$9.77 million for Aboriginal regional suicide prevention plans in each region of WA, prioritising Aboriginal-led and locally endorsed initiatives that accommodate a culturally informed social and emotional wellbeing approach to suicide prevention;
- \$1.85 million for upgrades to alcohol and other drug facilities in regional WA, including sobering up centres in Wyndham, Halls Creek and Fitzroy Crossing; and
- \$914,000 to increase training for Aboriginal staff in Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) services.

Mental health, alcohol and other drug services in your local area can be found at <http://www.myservices.org.au>

Comments attributed to Mental Health Minister Roger Cook:

"This year, with the COVID-19 pandemic impacting all of us, mental health and wellbeing has become more important than ever and the McGowan Government is committed to ensuring people can access help and support when they need it.

"This is evident through our annual \$1 billion investment - the biggest ever - into these services.

"Our message is clear, the network of hospitals and community services funded by the Mental Health Commission will be supported by this Government to provide mental health, alcohol and other drug support and treatment to all Western Australians, should they need it."

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