

Wednesday 30 March, 2022

Butterfly welcomes \$24.3m funding announcement for eating disorders

Butterfly Foundation, the national organisation for eating disorders and body image issues, acknowledges the Federal Government budget announcement of \$24.3 million for people with eating disorders and their families, as announced in the Australian Government's 2022-23 budget.

More than one million Australians are living with an eating disorder, which has one of the highest mortality rates of any mental illness. And yet less than a quarter of those receive treatment or support. Butterfly CEO, Kevin Barrow, said the announcements would help to support those with an eating disorder or body image issues, providing better access to critical treatment services, and investing in preventing eating disorders from developing.

The Budget announcement included funding for Butterfly's peer workforce project, another year of funding for the National Eating Disorders Collaboration ([NEDC](#)), additional funding for Australia's first residential treatment centre for eating disorders, Wandi Nerida, and funding to continue Butterfly activities, including [Butterfly Body Bright](#) for primary school students.

- \$1.3 million for Wandi Nerida, Australia's first residential treatment centre for eating disorders
- \$1.6 million for NEDC
- \$1.1 million for Butterfly for additional eating disorder and body image activities including scoping and advising on a peer workforce, support and advice to state and territory governments on residential centres, and Australia's first whole of school, primary school program for body image, Butterfly Body Bright.

In addition, \$20m of funding was announced for new specialised treatment services to be delivered in local community settings, supporting innovative and evidence-based models of care – funding that will be provided through a grant opportunity process.

"This was something we at Butterfly have been requesting of the government, including intensive day programs, post residential care, and care navigation roles within Primary Health Networks (PHNs)," said Kevin. "We made specific recommendations from our evaluation of the Sunshine Coast Eating Disorder Access Trial (SCEDAT); a pilot for Medicare item numbers specific to eating disorders. Our evaluation revealed several gaps in the system of care, and we are heartened to see that there will be an opportunity to address some of these gaps."

\$15.1m of funding will be provided for new MBS item numbers for up to four mental health case conferences per year, available under the Eating Disorder Treatment and Management Plan as well as under the Mental Health Treatment Plan. This will enable collaborative care between GPs and others involved in an individual's mental health care, such as a paediatrician, psychiatrist, psychologist, and other allied health professionals. "This is a much-needed incentive for health professionals to provide collaborative care for those with eating disorders and other mental health issues," said Kevin. "Evidence shows the best outcomes when eating disorders are treated with a multi-disciplinary team and this funding will facilitate that to happen. Again, this is something

Butterfly has been advocating for with the government, and we're very pleased to see it included in this year's Budget announcements."

"We look forward to continuing to work with the government at both Federal and State levels, and within the sector, continuing to advocate for the lives of people with eating disorders and body image issues, and those who care for them," said Kevin.

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Media Contact

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Editor and producers note: Please include the following support line details in all media coverage of this story and refer to the [Mindframe Media guidelines](#) for safe reporting on eating disorders. Please include the following helpline message.

Help and Support

Anyone needing support with eating disorders or body image issues is encouraged to contact:

- Butterfly National Helpline on 1800 33 4673 (1800 ED HOPE) or support@butterfly.org.au
- Eating Disorders Victoria Helpline on 1300 550 23
- For urgent support call Lifeline 13 11 14