

# Mental Health & AOD



## Main Investments

Where is the money going?	How much is being invested?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses to recommendations of the <b>Ministerial Taskforce into Public Mental Health Services for Infants, Children and Adolescents</b> in WA, including:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Expansion of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service frontline workforce across seven regions by 11.6 full time equivalent workers.</li> <li>○ Additional Peer Support Workers.</li> <li>○ A two-year virtual support service for at-risk children in the transition phase between services</li> <li>○ Establishment of an interagency program office, undertake service model design and develop an implementation plan; and</li> <li>○ Mental health workforce development initiatives.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	\$47.3 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributions to support the <b>WA Bilateral Schedule to the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement</b>. This agreement will go towards aftercare services, eating disorder services, and the establishment of a new Head to Health Kids Hub.</li> </ul>	\$27.5 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Video and telecommunication mental health support</b> to children and families in the transition phase between services</li> </ul>	\$10.5 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Expansion of the Peel Community and Alcohol Drug Services</b>, delivering an integrated AOD service within the Peel Health Hub for young people aged 14 and over.</li> </ul>	\$8.6 million to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Continuation of the ‘Preventing FASD Project’</b> which is a public awareness campaign aiming to reduce the incidence of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.</li> </ul>	\$6.1 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Continuation of the WA Country Health Service Mental Health Emergency Telehealth Service</b> which supports better access to services for rural and remote communities.</li> </ul>	\$5.1 million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Establishment of a Health Navigator Pilot Program</b> to help children in care get timely access to healthcare, mental health services and disability support. The pilot program is being jointly delivered by the Department of Communities and the Department of Health, with input from key stakeholders and young people.</li> </ul>	\$3.5 million

## Our Response

<i>The good:</i>	<i>The bad:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment into the mental health workforce is highly welcomed. It is hoped additional resourcing for frontline staff in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services will address long wait times. These offer much-needed relief to a strained and burnt-out workforce. These were critical areas heard in our 2021 State of the Youth Sector Forum, and a priority for investment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Despite a \$4.3 million increase in funding from 2021/22, mental health prevention spending declines by \$13.2 million from 2022/23 - 2025/26. Prevention services provide support to people to keep them well and prevent mental health and alcohol and other drug issues from escalating and requiring more intensive supports. Western Australia urgently requires an increase in funding for prevention services to meet targets established in the <i>Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Services Plan</i>.<sup>1</sup> Not meeting these targets risks additional burden on under-funded crisis services and increased wait-times for bed-based services.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment in establishing peer support workers and enabling increased use of telehealth for at-risk children are also welcome responses based on what young people have called for. This aligns with our consultation on the Young People's Priorities for Action document.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We need investment in specialist services for young people with unique needs that are being unmet by our current system. We are calling for additional dedicated services for LGBTIQ+ young people and young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Young people have told us current services are not meeting their needs and require dedicated initiatives.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government have acknowledged that during the past year costs have increased for building materials and workforce shortages have delayed some projects, but they are promising to still deliver on their election commitments for local and regional facilities and support programs such as the construction of a 20 bed AOD Rehabilitation facility and construction of a 10-bed step up/step down facility in South Hedland. We hope to see these promises fulfilled in the coming financial year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional investment is also required to understand the long-term effects COVID-19, higher inflation, housing prices, and climate issues will have on young people and their mental health.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Mental Health Commission (2018). *Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025: Plan Update 2018*. Retrieved from: <https://www.mhc.wa.gov.au/media/3516/plan-update-2018-corrections-29-july-2020.pdf>.