

## **LABOR TO DELIVER MORE FREE MENTAL HEALTH Services for Cranbourne**

Residents in Cranbourne will have more access to free, public mental health care backed by Medicare, thanks to a billion-dollar investment by a re-elected Albanese Labor Government.

Local residents will soon be able to access walk-in, no-cost mental health support with the establishment of a new Medicare Mental Health Centre in Cranbourne.

The Cranbourne Medicare Mental Health Centres will provide free, walk-in support for people experiencing mental health distress, as well as ongoing care for those with more complex needs. This centre will be staffed by a multidisciplinary team, including social workers, nurses, and peer support workers, who will offer wraparound care across extended hours.

To further boost access to specialist care, the 2024–25 Budget includes an additional \$29.9 million to ensure that every centre has access to psychologists and psychiatrists.

Nationally, Labor's \$1 billion mental health commitment includes:

- \$225 million for 31 new and upgraded Medicare Mental Health Centres
- More than \$200 million for 58 new, upgraded, or expanded headspace services
- \$500 million for 20 Youth Specialist Care Centres to support young people with complex mental health needs
- \$90 million to train more than 1,200 mental health professionals and peer workers in postgraduate courses and workplace placements

From 1 January 2026, a new national early intervention service will launch, providing free mental health support to approximately 150,000 Australians each year—no referrals, no gap fees, just the help people need when they need it.

1 in 5 Australians have a mental disorder, and young Australians aged 18-24 are now experiencing the highest levels of mental ill-health in recorded history. Cost remains the major barrier to accessing mental health support, which is why Labor is making targeted investments to boost services and expand the workforce.

Providing more free, public mental health services will also relieve pressure on subsidised services provided by private psychologists.

This stands in stark contrast to Peter Dutton's plan, which would push more people into private services, increasing gap fees and making waitlists even longer.

Consistent with past practice, election commitments will be delivered in line with Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles.

**Quotes attributable to Cassandra Fernando MP, Federal Member for Holt:**

"Holt is one of the youngest electorates in the country, and I've been fighting to secure better mental health services for our community—particularly for our young people."

"Too many people in Cranbourne and surrounding suburbs are struggling to get the mental health support they need, when they need it. This new Medicare Mental Health Centre will be a game-changer, providing free, accessible care close to home."

"The Albanese Labor Government is delivering real solutions, making mental health care more affordable and accessible—because quality care should be based on need, not your ability to pay."

"Labor is building a stronger Medicare, while Peter Dutton's approach will only make services harder to access and more expensive for Australians."

**Tuesday 8th April 2025**

**MEDIA CONTACT:**