

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

460,000 AUSTRALIANS – STILL NO ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

Australia's Health and Mental Health ministers have failed to address the psychosocial support gap for around 460,000 people living with moderate and high-need mental health challenges.

Health Ministers and Mental Health ministers met on Friday 13 June 2025 to discuss future psychosocial support arrangements and have **chosen to maintain business as usual** despite having full knowledge of the hundreds of thousands of Australians who cannot access supports to help them live well in the community.

In the nine months since the [Unmet Needs](#) report revealed the staggering number of people unable to access these services, the ministers have **chosen to do nothing** in relation to their responsibilities under the National Agreement on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention including agreeing on roles and responsibilities in relation to psychosocial supports and developing a schedule of works.

They have also **chosen to ignore** multiple calls from the mental health sector to urgently invest in existing services while future psychosocial support arrangements are on the drawing board.

The official [communique](#) from the meeting suggests no further investment will be made in psychosocial supports until a new National Agreement is in place – likely but not guaranteed to take place in the second half of 2026.

MIFA CEO Tony Stevenson said this was not good enough.

'The Ministers are acutely aware of the level of unmet need; indeed, they were instrumental in commissioning the report which quantified it. It beggars belief they are not doing anything about it. People with mental health challenges in Australia have been waiting on community supports since 2019 – six years is a long time for individuals, and a long time for families.

'We have said this many times, and we will say it again:

- Current community-based psychosocial services must be expanded immediately
- Ministers must decide on co-funding arrangements for new investment in community-based psychosocial support services
- People living with mental health challenges, and families, must lead the co-design of future support services
- Governments must close the gap in psychosocial support for individuals and families by 2030

Without adequate psychosocial supports, people with severe mental health conditions will continue to experience:

- Shorter lives – on average, people with severe mental illness die up to 23 years earlier than the general population
- Attempts to take their own lives – approximately 50% of people with the most severe mental illness attempt suicide, compared to 3.7% of the general population
- Relationship breakdowns, loss of employment, homelessness, marginalisation and stigma, long stays in hospital, increased dependence on income support, loss of educational opportunities, and involvement with police and the justice system.

‘Around Australia we are seeing excessive emergency department wait times, and critical blockages to access psychiatric and psychological services. Addressing the gap in community based psychosocial services, and keeping people well in the community, would substantially reduce these pressures.

‘Australians continue to miss out because governments cannot work out their roles, responsibilities, or funding arrangements in relation to psychosocial supports. This is not, and never has been, acceptable. People living with high need mental health challenges should not, and must not, pay the price of continued neglect,’ Mr Stevenson said.

ENDS

Media contact:

CEO Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia Tony Stevenson | 0400 555 433

