



Ray Williams MP

Member for Castle Hill

Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier and Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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STATE MEMBER FOR CASTLE HILL WELCOMES \$130 MILLION MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY PACKAGE

People in the Castle Hill community will benefit from the NSW Government's new \$130 million package which will provide immediate access to help for anyone whose mental health has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Member for Castle Hill Ray Williams MP said the funding boost will work to cut headspace waitlists, provide more access to psychology, psychiatry and other allied health services, and introduce community led wellbeing programs and events. The investment will also launch a state-wide suicide prevention training program for 275,000 parents, high school teachers, sports coaches, community leaders and youth workers – the biggest suicide prevention training program ever undertaken.

“This package focuses on making sure people young and old can turn to trusted people in every corner of their community for support, whether that be a teacher or the coach or captain at the footy club, and when they do, they will not be turned away,” Mr Williams said.

“As we enter our new COVID-normal this investment will boost capacity to meet demand and making sure the Castle Hill community is at the centre of the recovery,” Mr Williams said.

Premier Dominic Perrottet said the lockdown combined with working from home and home schooling has seen a record number of people reach out to crisis lines.

“As we navigate the economic recovery from this pandemic we must also support people's mental wellbeing along the way.”

“By reducing the wait time for local headspaces, and opening up more funded psychology and psychiatry places, we will ensure that parents, children and the most vulnerable in our community can get the help they need now,” Mr Perrottet said.

Minister for Mental Health Bronnie Taylor said the new funding will train 275,000 people in the community to become mental health first aiders.

“We want NSW to be a whole state of mental health champions, which is why we're launching a statewide community training blitz to make sure help is always close at hand, from the schoolyard to the sports club and beyond.” Mrs Taylor said.



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“The boost will also provide nearly 150,000 additional consultations with psychologists and psychiatrists, free up more mental health beds, and introduce mental health initiatives in local sports clubs and community groups.”

The new funding builds on the \$2.6 billion 2021-2022 NSW Mental Health Budget – the largest mental health investment in the State’s history.

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