



# Mental Health & Drugs Update

22 April 2010



The Hon Lisa Neville MP

Dear friends and colleagues

As you will be aware, at the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting of 19 and 20 April 2010 the Brumby Government secured a deal that will deliver better healthcare for all patients via an historic \$935 million deal.

This agreement builds on the strengths of the Victorian health system and delivers vital new investment.

Through continued investment and innovation, the Brumby Government has already made significant progress in reforming the Victorian mental health system through the implementation of *Because Mental Health Matters*.

Over \$300m in new funds has already been committed to the reform strategy, and many of its key aspects are already underway.

To complement the important work we're already doing here in Victoria to get better outcomes for people living with a mental illness, a number of additional key investments will be made as part of the National Health and Hospitals Network as agreed at COAG.

Funding to be provided nationally over 4 years includes:

- \$174 million to improve primary mental health care including \$115 million in new funding. This includes \$78.3 million to deliver up to 30 new youth-focused services and to provide extra funding for the existing 30 headspace sites. These new sites will provide a welcome increase in support and early intervention capacity for young people, and also complement the significant investment made by the Brumby Government in this important reform area to date.
- \$24.8 million will be provided to expand the Early Psychosis Prevention and Intervention Centre (EPPIC) model in partnership with the states, which builds on the innovative Victorian model. This will provide young people and their families with improved detection of early psychosis and provide earlier treatment and support.
- \$13 million will be provided to employ an additional 136 mental health nurses through the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program.
- \$57.4 million over four years will be provided for care packages to better support people with severe mental illness, with these services to be delivered by Access to Allied Psychological Services arrangements.

- Investment in sub-acute care of \$1.62 billion includes some extra provisions for ‘step up, step down’ sub-acute services for people with mental health needs, which will ease their transition from acute care to the community.

The new agreement on national health reform is a big win for Victorians living with a mental illness and their families and I’m delighted that there will be significant new investment from the Commonwealth to complement those already made through the implementation of *Because Mental Health Matters*.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Neville', written in a cursive style.

**Hon Lisa Neville MP**  
**Minister for Mental Health**

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