

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mental health spending in the community sector needs to increase

Spending on mental health services delivered by the crucial non-government sector is still far too low, Productivity Commission figures released today reveal.

The Productivity Commission Report on Government Services health chapter shows nationally only 12.7% of the total mental health budget is spent on mental health services provided by community-managed organisations.

NSW has one of the lowest levels of spending on mental health services delivered by not-for-profit organisations in the community, at just 7.35% of its total mental health budget.

MHCC CEO Carmel Tebbutt says the figures are disappointing as there is significant evidence quality services delivered in the community provide better outcomes for people, carers and their families, and can reduce pressure on the health system.

“These figures demonstrate the importance of government action to implement the recommendations in the comprehensive report into mental health released by the [Productivity Commission](#) last year.

“That report estimates 154,000 people who would benefit from psychosocial support services are not currently receiving them.

“We support the recommendations that call on all governments to ensure people living with mental health conditions receive the support and services they need to live fulfilling lives in the community.

The community-managed mental health sector delivers psychosocial support through a range of services to help people manage daily activities, maintain social connections, and secure accommodation, education and employment.

These services play a vital role in maximising recovery for people living with enduring mental health conditions.

Too often, people are in crisis before they can get the support they need, as shown by the increasing rate of mental health-related emergency department presentations, Carmel Tebbutt says.

“A large proportion of NSW’s mental health funding is directed towards acute care services (55.3%) which are designed to support a small percentage of people, rather than community-based services.

“We need to invest in a greater number of services and programs, provided in the community by organisations with a strong local presence so people get the services they need in the right place, at the right time.”

For more on the [Productivity Commission Report on Government Services: Mental Health](#).

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Our Vision

That people living with mental health conditions are supported to live meaningful lives in the communities of their choice