

Key Priority Areas

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists Western Australian Branch wants all West Australians to have access to a high-quality mental health system which can provide a seamless continuum of care, from acute crisis care to ongoing recovery and rehabilitation services in the community. The Western Australian government must bolster mental health services to meet the needs of our community and achieve positive outcomes for all those seeking mental health treatment and support, whatever their age and wherever they live. Furthermore, all Western Australians should have access to specialised inpatient and outpatient treatment for complex disorders such as eating disorders, forensics, and substance use disorders.

1. Prevent the imminent clinical workforce crisis and address the worsening psychiatry shortage

Act now to address the shortfall in the clinical and professional mental health workforce, including the predicted psychiatry shortage.

Fund the development of a psychiatry workforce and training plan, including measures to secure and implement a viable rural training pipeline, at an estimated cost of at least \$250,000.

2. Increase forensic beds before WA runs out

Urgent investment is required to avoid a crisis in WA in which we run out of forensic beds by 2021.

- > Invest in a ward for 10-15 stable Custody Order patients to be diverted from the Frankland Centre. Investment must fund transfer costs and recurrent rehabilitative care.
- > Plan and develop a new secure inpatient unit to meet projected demand by 2025, which includes a single-sex acute ward for women.
- > Invest \$3.5M for a dedicated Forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health service, and Aboriginal Forensic Liaison service.





3. Enhance community care across the State to prevent hospital admissions and provide an alternative to the ED

Provide effective, community based mental health crisis, assessment and short-term treatment interventions as a first option, reducing demand for crisis mental health care in emergency departments across the State, including in rural and remote areas.

Properly resourced community-based services should include:

- > Crisis assessment and treatment teams (CATT) linked to every adult mental health service in WA.
- > Adequately resourced continuing treatment teams able to offer evidence supported interventions for mental health disorders.

- > Specialised services to support community mental health care treatment, including Drug and Alcohol officers, General Practice liaison and Aboriginal liaison.
- > A focus on physical health outcomes with physical health nurse specialists and formal integration/access to general practitioners.

These services should be supported by:

- > Community services and community residential services providing longer term treatment and psychosocial support for recovery and rehabilitation, through mobile support and treatment teams and community care units and other longer-term residential services.

4. Expand eating disorder services to address urgent unmet need

In the short term, urgently invest \$25 million over 4 years to establish structured eating disorder day programs for both youth and adults to provide step-up, step-down care in the community. There must be additional investment in outpatient treatments delivered by integrated multidisciplinary teams in each of the area health services.

Medium term, implement a comprehensive continuum model of care for individuals with eating disorders. This includes access to funded specialist inpatient beds within each area health service; the critical need for 40 inpatient beds by 2025 being identified in the WA Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan.

5. Fund addiction psychiatry services to improve access to care

Address the critical shortage of addiction psychiatrists and improve access to care for individuals with substance use disorders.

Scope and implement a state-wide model to expand the addiction psychiatry workforce and in the first three years:

- > Fund 3 FTE addiction psychiatry positions in public mental health services.
- > Fund 3 FTE addiction psychiatry trainee positions in public mental health services.

Contact

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