The conditions are ripe for a new round of meaningful health reform, underpinned by stable and significant long-term funding to ensure the best possible mental health outcomes for NSW citizens.

The 2019 election and budget provide the Government and major political parties with the perfect opportunity to reveal their vision for the state’s mental health system.

This RANZCP NSW Branch’s Pre-Budget Submission sets out a range of policies where focussed attention by Government is required to advance priority areas in mental health care. We believe they are practical, achievable and affordable.

What’s needed?
Invest $2.5 million over five years to establish a Rural Psychiatry Project to support rural psychiatric registrars.

Properly fund the Mental Health Access Line (MHAL) to ensure people with mental health conditions, their carers and health care professionals access the right mental health service at the right time and place.

Invest $500,000 undertaking consultations across all NSW Local Health Districts and Networks to identify service co-ordination gaps in mental health services for children and young people.

Invest $750,000 annually creating 10 Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Trainee Fellowships to build capacity and capability in specialist child and adolescent psychiatry in high need areas.

People with complex traumatic and personality disorders
Invest to build capability of the mental health workforce
- Invest $2 million annually to develop the capability of the mental health workforce in delivering therapeutic interventions and supports for consumers with complex trauma and personality disorders.

Forensic
Ensure equivalency of care for people with mental illness in custody
- Invest $3 million annually to increase bed capacity (by up to 15 beds) for prisoners with severe mental illness
- Establish an appropriate number of Assertive Multidisciplinary Case Management Teams (with clinical leadership by a psychiatrist) to provide assertive treatment, follow up and release planning for those in prison with serious mental illness.

Premier’s priority no. 10 Reducing recidivism in the prison population. Reduce adult reoffending following release from prison by 5 per cent by 2023.

Older people
More support is needed for older people with mental illness
- Invest $28 million over four years to employ 45 clinical nurse specialists (in old age psychiatry) across NSW to enable increased access to mental health services for older people with a mental illness who are at risk of social isolation and suicide.
- Invest $26 million over four years establishing 16 Assertive Outreach Teams to provide multidisciplinary care, comprehensive assessment, proper care planning, and follow-up monitoring and care for older people with severe mental health conditions.

Premier’s priority no. 10. Towards zero suicides. Reduce the rate of suicide deaths in NSW by 20 per cent by 2023.

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