

SA

GREENS COMMIT \$1.1B AS OLD PARTIES NEGLECT MENTAL HEALTH

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The Australian Greens' multi-million dollar commitment boosting mental health research, primarily so all Australians can access quality care, say Senator Penny Wright and ACT Senate candidate Simon Sheikh.

Today's announcement of a further \$547.4 million for mental health services brings the total of Australian Greens commitments to \$1.1 billion, following the [rural mental health package](#) announced last week.

"Almost half of all Australians will experience mental ill-health at some point in their lives, yet the government isn't talking about mental health in this election," said spokesperson for mental health, Senator Wright.

"Our mental health system has been underfunded for too long. Poor mental health can affect every aspect of education and employment, so efficient, caring and empowering mental health care also makes economic sense."

New initiatives announced by the Australian Greens today include:

- \$70 million a year to the Mental Health Nurses incentive program to promote early intervention services

- \$47.2 million a year to reinstate the option of a further six sessions under the Better Access initiative to access effective and cost-efficient treatment

- \$150 million over three years to establish a National Institute for Mental Illness Research

- \$38.3 million for a national suicide prevention campaign

Australian Greens ACT senate candidate Simon Sheikh said he had always been passionate about mental health services and improving their accessibility to all Australians.

"Of my time at GetUp, securing additional funding for mental health reform is one of my collective victories," Mr Sheikh said.

"Having grown up as carer for my mum who was mentally ill, I know what a difference the funding announced today will make to so many people's lives.

"A strong, fair and healthy community relies on investment in mental health research and accessible services."

Read more about the Australian Greens' announcement on mental health funding here: <http://greens.org.au/mental-health>



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