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IMPROVING RURAL MENTAL HEALTH

Rural Australians are missing out on life-saving mental health services. We're standing up fo

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Australians living outside urban areas are currently missing out on life-saving mental health services.

Greens spokesperson for Mental Health, Senator Penny Wright, travelled through rural, regional and remote Aus strengths and weaknesses of the rural mental health system. [Read her report.](#)

We have listened carefully to the voices and experiences of people living in country Australia and know that man health care and help they need in rural areas.

Based on what we heard, we have developed a strong plan to move away from crisis-driven services to boost co intervention and ongoing support.

We've based our rural mental health policy around what we learned and heard from those who know rural menta on the frontline.

Our 8-point rural mental health plan is comprehensive, fully costed and designed to ensure more country Austral when they need it.



RURAL MENTAL HEALTH ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

Our plan includes funding to reform rural mental health across the lifespan by funding flexible, multi-disciplinary community-based care.

Country Australians face unique challenges affecting their mental health: drought and other natural disasters, rural unemployment and poor access to health services.

We will invest \$55 million a year to build on the success of the Headspace model, offering grants and training to support community-based care to cover key life stages.

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

During [our tour of rural Australia](#), we saw firsthand the value of community houses and neighbourhood houses.

These are places where people can share meals, socialise, participate in recreational activities, learn from each other and "belong".

Our plan includes an investment of \$20 million a year for more resources for community-based mental health services and neighbourhood houses.

Evidence shows community-based programs assist with social inclusion and community wellbeing while providing a range of services, including those related to mental health.

ADDRESSING WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Rural, regional and remote mental health service providers across Australia told us about the challenge of not having enough qualified, experienced staff.

We heard that the current rural mental health workforce is under-staffed, under-resourced and under-trained.

We also heard there is a need for a diverse rural mental health workforce including more peer workers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other cultural backgrounds.

That's why we will invest \$35 million per year to develop a rural mental health workforce plan, including greater investment in education, research and training to grow a strong and effective rural mental health workforce.

 [Download our full Rural Regional and Remote Mental Health plan \(PDF 165 KB\)](#)

 [Download the full report from Penny's Rural Mental Health tour \(PDF 563 KB\)](#)

POLICY CATEGORY:

HEALTH

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