



MEDIA RELEASE

\$1.5 million expansion of headspace services for Armidale

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The Government will allocate \$1.53 million to expand the headspace network in Armidale.

One in four people aged 16 to 24 experiences some form of mental illness every year and three-quarters of all mental illness manifests in people under the age of 25. Intervention at the earliest possible stage is important to reduce the duration and impact.

Armidale was identified by headspace National and the local Primary Health Network (PHN), Hunter New England and Central Coast, as an area of particular need.

Member for New England, Barnaby Joyce, said the Armidale funding offered peace of mind to young people in the local region.

“We have a growing population in Armidale and this funding for expansion of mental health services through headspace will provide added support to young people when and where they need it,” Mr Joyce said.

“I am committed to ensuring young Australians can get information, advice, counselling or treatment, no matter their physical location. These guaranteed new frontline services will help deliver that support in Armidale and together with the headspace centre in Tamworth, across the wider New England.”

Hunter New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network CEO, Richard Nankervis, said the funding would provide much needed support.

“We can now work to boost mental health services in Armidale through headspace and make sure more young adults have access to this invaluable support network,” Mr Nankervis said.

Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, said the expanded headspace service will deliver vital assistance for young Australians in the New England.

“I want our young people to know they are not alone on their journey, and that headspace is there to deliver quality frontline services and coordinate the right interventions for people who are at risk,” Minister Hunt said.

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Hon **Barnaby Joyce** MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

The headspace program aims to improve access for young people aged 12 to 25 years who have, or are at risk of, mental illness. headspace offers early intervention services across four key areas—mental health, related physical health, social and vocational support, and alcohol and other drug use.

Services provide tailored and holistic mental health support, working closely with young people at a crucial time in their lives to help get them back on track and strengthen their ability to manage their mental health in the future.

This investment is part of the Federal Coalition Government's \$461 million Youth and Indigenous Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan – the largest investment of its kind in the country's history. The expanded service in Armidale is one of 30 new sites announced as part of the expansion of the headspace network from 115 to 145 sites nationally. It is expected that it will open by the middle of next year.

The investment will build on vital mental health services for young people in NSW facing mental health challenges.

The Liberal National Government is absolutely committed to ensuring young people have access to mental health services in their local areas. Since October 2018, the Government has provided over \$200 million more funding to the headspace network. This is in addition to the more than \$120 million per year provided for the 1115 services nationally.

The Government is prioritising better mental health for all Australians with \$736 million additional funding announced in the Budget and a record \$4.7 billion expected to be spent on mental health this financial year alone.

The Government's strong economic management ensures the continued record investment of funding into vital health initiatives including mental health, life-saving medicines, Medicare and hospitals.

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