

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Investment in mental health care must be a Budget priority**

Mental health care needs to be made more affordable, accessible and equitable, with practical solutions provided for a strained workforce in the upcoming Budget, according to the Australian Association of Psychologists (AAPi).

AAPi Executive Director, Tegan Carrison, said the government had promised to work closely with all service providers in an effort to ease the mental health crisis, but it did not seem to be listening.

“Despite a change of government and their promise of making mental healthcare more accessible in the October budget, the mental health crisis has not eased,” she said.

“Cost is still the number one barrier to seeing a psychologist, rebates have not increased in line with the cost of living, waiting lists are still unacceptable, the workforce is under relentless strain and people are still suffering.

“Our psychologists are telling us that they have clients who are having to choose between therapy and paying their rent, or spacing out their sessions to inadequate levels. We must urgently address these issues.”

#### **What AAPi would like to see in the upcoming Federal Budget:**

1. A rebate of \$150 for every session for every psychologist and the end of the [two-tier rebate system](#) for psychologists.
2. Reversal of the cuts to the Medicare-subsidised psychology sessions to support Australians living with mental ill-health and struggling to access the services they need.
3. Allowing provisional psychologists to provide services under Medicare to create a larger pool of mental health professionals that the community can affordably access.
4. Incentives for rural and regional practitioners.
5. Provision of more university places and greater levels of funding subsidies for the next generation of psychologists.

“We encourage the community to send their local Federal MP a message about mental healthcare priorities for this Budget by visiting [Help Us Help More](#) and filling out the email template,” Ms Carrison said.

#### **About AAPi**

*The AAPi is a not-for-profit peak body for all psychologists that aims to preserve the rich diversity of psychological practice in Australia. Formed in 2010 by a group of passionate*

*grassroots psychologists, the AAPI's primary goal is to address inequality in the profession and represent all psychologists and their clients equally to government and funding bodies. Its primary mission is to lobby for equitable access for the Australian public to professional psychological services.*

*For more information visit [www.aapi.org.au](http://www.aapi.org.au)*