

MEDIA RELEASE



Wednesday, 9 May 2018

Budget 2018: Boost in rural mental health requires a regional planning focus

The Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health (CRRMH) welcomes further investment in rural mental health and suicide prevention as advocated in the [Centre's position paper: Rural Suicide and its Prevention](#)

Specifically, we acknowledge the commitment of resources towards supporting the mental health of older Australians in the community, preventing people who experience suicidality from taking their own lives as well as the expansion of mental health services in rural and remote areas.

The CRRMH also welcomes the expansion of Lifeline crisis support services over the next four years and the increased investment in the National Mental Health Commission to support the implementation of the Fifth Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan.

CRRMH Director, Professor Perkins said it is encouraging to see these measures included and while they are all steps in the right direction, there must be effective regional planning by Primary Health Networks and others to ensure that rural and remote communities benefit from these new and expanded programs.

"The welcome investment in research is needed to ensure that these programs achieve their goals and that access to effective mental health services is improved and that the unacceptable rates of rural suicide are reduced.

"We need to ensure rural communities and service providers are engaged in all areas of planning, service delivery and research," he said.

"Research must be broader than just looking at treatment options, we must consult with rural communities and service providers about specific community needs and service priorities," said Professor Perkins.

The CRRMH welcomes the opportunity to partner with organisations that wish to take action and have a positive impact on rural mental health issues.

Download the Centre's [position paper on "Rural Suicide and its Prevention"](#) at www.crrmh.com.au.

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call **000** or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.

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If you're concerned about your own or someone else's mental health, you can call the **NSW Mental Health Line 1800 011 511** or Lifeline on 13 11 14.

For best practice guidelines on Mental Health Reporting, visit <http://www.mindframe-media.info/>

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