



**WAAMH**

Western Australian Association  
for Mental Health

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**26 November 2015**

## **WAAMH welcomes federal government response to the National Review of Mental Health Services and Programs**

WESTERN Australia's peak body for community mental health, the WA Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) has welcomed today's federal government's response to the National Review of Mental Health Services and Programs, but questioned whether the plan could be achieved without up-front investment.

This morning's announcement revealed nine key actions that aim to reform mental healthcare from a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to individualised care.

WAAMH strongly supports the better targeting of services to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions, including the introduction of individualised support packages to people with severe and enduring mental health issues in the community.

The shift in the management of Commonwealth community mental health funding, including funding for a new national suicide prevention strategy, closer to the ground through the newly created Primary Health Networks (PHN) was also a welcomed addition.

While WAAMH supported the extensive and systemic nature of the reforms, there was uncertainty whether they could be achieved within the current mental health funding envelope.

WAAMH president Alison Xamon said the focus on children, youth, regional and remote, indigenous, and digital mental health were all steps in the right direction.

"There is the potential for the Commonwealth to realise long term savings in income support and acute care costs from these reforms but an up-front investment to refocus mental health services to the community would ensure their success," Ms Xamon said.

"There needs to be close collaboration between the PHNs and the WA Mental Health Commission to achieve the integration envisaged in the report and to ensure the investment by both federal and state governments in mental health and suicide prevention is optimised.

"It is our understanding that this collaboration is occurring which provides a unique opportunity for the funding of mental health services. However we will need to keep a close eye on how this develops to ensure this doesn't result in cost shifting by either party."

Read the federal government's announcement [here](#)

Read more about WAAMH's position on the National Mental Health Services Review, [here](#)

### **About WAAMH**

The Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) was incorporated in 1966 and is the peak body representing WA's community-managed mental health sector, with around 100 organisational and individual members. WAAMH advocates for effective public policy on mental health issues, delivers workforce training and sector development, and promotes positive mental health and wellbeing. Further info at <http://www.waamh.org.au>

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