



MEDIA RELEASE

25 September 2020

## New figures reveal McGowan failing on mental health support

### Media Statement: The Western Australian Association for Mental Health

People with mental health challenges have only a 1 in 5 chance of accessing community mental health support in WA with new figures revealing the McGowan Government provided just 209,070 of the 2.9million community mental health support hours needed in 2020 to assist people across the State.

New figures from the Mental Health Commission, from the 2018/19 reporting period also reveal just 767 hours were delivered by community support mental health services in the Kimberley, falling well short of the 154,000 hours target required by 2025. In the Pilbara, a shocking 381 hours were delivered, a fraction of the 170,000 hours needed by 2025.

Community supports work with people to secure a job, form relationships, build fulfilling lives, develop skills and interests, prevent hospital admissions and issues escalating to crisis point, while promoting healing and keeping people living well in their own homes.

The figures released by the Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) are included in a new Election Platform report for the Prevent Support Heal campaign.

WAAMH Chief Executive Officer Taryn Harvey called on the government to urgently fund the community mental health support services to meet peoples' needs.

"The McGowan Government is falling dangerously behind on its own targets to fund community support services, meaning people are being turned away because demand is so high," she said.

"These figures show that even before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, community support services were dealing with a high demand of people reaching out for help, let alone during a pandemic when people weren't able to access treatment through hospital.

"We need five times as much community mental health support than is available for people when and where they need it."

The Prevent Support Heal Election Platform manifesto details of the kinds of community support people want and will be used to inform the McGowan Government on funding opportunities ahead of the 2021 State Election.

"Premier McGowan must urgently deliver more community support hours where and when people need and want them, otherwise he is simply failing people with mental health challenges in Western Australia," Ms Harvey said.



## Fact Box:

Community supports are non-clinical supports that advance people's personal recovery, rights and opportunities. They are empowering, offer hope and include people's social context – trauma, income, community connection, culture or housing – not just a focus on symptoms. They include peer support, personal recovery programs, groups, family and carer support, housing and employment programs.

## WAAMH calls on the State Government to:

- Increase investment in prevention from 1% to 5% of the mental health budget.
- Funding to community mental health services to increase five-fold – from \$48 million to \$250 million.

## Hours of support

REGION	2013 Actual	2017 Actual	2020 Optimal	2025 Optimal	Hours of CS provided 2018-19
Total needed for whole of WA	842,000	910,000	2,935,000	4,892,000	
East Metro			762,000	1,270,000	2233
North Metro			765,000	1,275,000	15,760
South Metro			681,000	1,134,000	9,857
Northern and Remote total**			371,000	619,000	7,185
Goldfields				131,000	3,569
Kimberley				154,000	767
Pilbara				170,000	381
Midwest				163,000	2,468
Southern Country total^			356,000	594,000	28,961
Great Southern				118,000	14,551
South West				321,000	11,182
Wheatbelt				156,000	3,228
State-wide*					18,180
Metro-wide*					126,894
<b>Total</b>					<b>209,070</b>

\*These hours refer to hours available for access across the entire state or metro area, in addition to regional-specific hours.

\*\*Northern and Remote total includes Goldfields, Kimberley, Pilbara and Mid-west

^ Southern Country total includes Great Southern, South-west and the Wheatbelt

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SUPPORT.  
HEAL.



For more information about Prevent Support Heal visit: [www.preventsupportheal.org.au](http://www.preventsupportheal.org.au)

Read here: [the Government's Mental Health Plan](#)

## Media contacts

### Taryn Harvey

Chief Executive Officer  
WA Association for Mental Health  
08 6246 3000  
[THarvey@waamh.org.au](mailto:THarvey@waamh.org.au)

### Kerry Hawkins

President  
WA Association for Mental Health  
08 6246 3000  
[president@waamh.org.au](mailto:president@waamh.org.au)

### Sarah Quinton

Campaign Manager  
WA Association for Mental Health  
0439 439 233  
[SQuinton@waamh.org.au](mailto:SQuinton@waamh.org.au)

Prevent, Support, Heal  
Authorised by Taryn Harvey, CEO  
Western Australian Association for Mental Health  
1 Nash Street, Perth, WA 6000  
08 6246 3000  
[preventsupportheal.org.au](http://preventsupportheal.org.au)  
[preventsupportheal@waamh.org.au](mailto:preventsupportheal@waamh.org.au)



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