

Key Messages

with a few facts thrown in...

We have collated some examples of the types of key messages you may wish to use in your state election advocacy to Make Mental Health Count, on your social media feeds, in your letters and in talking points for your phone call or meeting with a MP. You can copy these as is or adapt them to best suit you.

Bring your preferred message/s to life by telling your audience what it means to people with lived experience you support, or to you as an organisation. Using real life examples say what the problem is, how it's evident in your local community and what politicians can commit to that would change it for the better.

Statements about broad values

It is usually helpful to begin your approach with an appeal to commonly held values for example: "We all benefit when we, as a community, make sure everyone can reach their potential and fully contribute to our communities."

Specific election commitment statements

More hospital beds just don't add up. We need election commitments that will deliver on the primary focus of the Mental Health Plan: rebalancing services between hospital-based and community-based services. That is, moving services to the community where people live and work.

Election commitments must deliver supports to the right people, at the right time and in the right places. Recent announcements focus on an array of acute and sub-acute services. This is like building the roof before the support beams. Make Mental Health Count this election – Back the Plan and invest in community based recovery supports.

This state election, our parties are talking about reducing the pressure on emergency departments and hospitals. The answer is not more beds – it is earlier intervention, real care pathways, carer and family supports, and community based recovery supports.

To Make Mental Health Count this election, we must back the Plan to build a better future.

Statements about community mental health supports

Just like building a house, good mental health is built from different materials and expertise - we need the foundations of prevention for children and young people, a range of community based recovery supports, safe homes with associated supports, as well as more intensive services for those that need them.

More hospital beds just don't add up. The foundations of a functional system are the essential building blocks of earlier intervention, community services and pathways of supports. What we are all looking for is the foundations of an effective system. A fundamental shift in the balance of investment away from acute care and into the community, close to where people live and work, and earlier in their recovery journey.

Recovery supports across our state, safe and stable homes, and real access to the NDIS will keep people living well in the community. Preventing mental health problems, intervening early with the growing rates of young people who are distressed, and providing supports in the community close to where people live and work is what builds good mental health and wellbeing.

Broad overall statements

Back the Plan to Build a Better Future. Mental Health Recovery Works.

Effective supports decrease social and economic costs, decrease demand for acute services, improve mental health, lead to better outcomes and are better value.

Without effective supports we have increased mental health problems, increased homelessness, increased demand for acute services and ongoing high rates of suicide.

Statements about economic investment

If government invests in the right supports, there is reward – both to the lives and wellbeing of people with mental health issues, and to the government's bottom line.

A balanced, effective mental health system will prevent worsening mental health and increased public system costs.

Prevention, early intervention and community support saves money:

- Save \$84,000 per person per year with supported housing
- Increase employment from 23% - 61% with support
- Save \$45,000 - \$674,000 per person over 9 years with early treatment
- Save \$1.4 - \$2.4 for every \$1 spent to prevent imprisonment

For other economic facts see the make Mental Health Count infographic:

<https://waamh.org.au/assets/documents/systemic-advocacy/make-mental-health-count-infographic.pdf>

See the Advocacy for Action pack for key messages, asks and concerns of carer and consumer organisations:

<https://waamh.org.au/assets/documents/workshops-and-forums/sample-book.pdf>