

## CSSA Welcomes Cross-Party Commitment to Mental Health Support

April 14, 2025

Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA) today commended both the Government and the Opposition for their strong commitment to addressing mental health issues as a key priority in the upcoming Federal Election.

Mental health challenges remain significant barriers to individuals achieving their full potential and leading fulfilling lives. With both major political parties announcing substantial investment plans for mental health services, CSSA recognises this approach as an important step forward.

"The human cost of unaddressed mental health issues is immeasurable," said Dr Jerry Nockles, Executive Director of CSSA. "When people cannot access timely and appropriate mental health support, it doesn't just affect individuals – it diminishes our collective wellbeing as a society and prevents people from participating fully in community life."

"Catholic Social Teaching reminds us that human dignity is foundational to a just society. Mental health support is not a luxury but a necessity if we are to uphold the dignity of every person and ensure everyone can contribute to and benefit from our shared community," Dr Nockles added.

CSSA acknowledges Labor's recently announced \$1 billion package for mental health services, including funding for Medicare mental health centres, expanded Headspace services, and specialist youth care centres. Similarly, the Opposition has committed to matching key health funding and increasing Medicare-subsidised mental health sessions from 10 to 20.

"Our member organisations across Australia witness daily how mental health issues can become entrenched when left unaddressed. While we acknowledge the different approaches being put forward by both parties, we warmly welcome the demonstration that mental health is firmly on the national agenda," said Dr Nockles.

"Working for the Common Good means creating social conditions where all people can flourish. A robust mental health system that supports everyone, particularly the most vulnerable, is essential to building a society where each person can live with dignity and participate meaningfully in community life."

# MEDIA RELEASE



As a strictly-independent voice of social services in Australia, CSSA calls for the next government to undertake comprehensive reform of the mental health system as a top priority, ensuring services are accessible to all Australians regardless of location, income or background.

"The Productivity Commission found that mental ill-health costs Australia around \$200 billion per year. Investment in mental health is not just the right thing to do morally – it makes economic sense as well," said Dr Nockles.

CSSA urges both parties to continue working towards a health system that recognises the intrinsic connection between mental and physical wellbeing, and which prioritises early intervention and prevention alongside acute care.

**ENDS**

## About Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA)

[Catholic Social Services Australia](#) (CSSA) advocates for the Church's social service ministry. It is the national peak body for Catholic social service providers. The CSSA's network operates across all Australian States and Territories and has over seven hundred sites.

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