

## ACPA Media Release

### Federal Budget Delivers Mental Health Support for Australians

6<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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-- MEDIA RELEASE --

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The Australian Clinical Psychology Association (ACPA) commends the Federal Government on what is a momentous investment in the mental health of the nation, totalling \$5.7 billion across 2020-2021.

“The announcement of doubling of the number of Medicare-funded psychological sessions from 10 to 20 will go a long way to addressing the unmet need in the community” said ACPA’s President, Associate Professor Vida Bliokas.

ACPA has advocated for many years for increased Government support for mental health treatment, to support the wellbeing of all Australians.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has presented an unprecedented challenge to the mental health of the nation” said Associate Professor Bliokas. “Clinical Psychologists across the country have witnessed first-hand the mental health impact of the pandemic. ACPA’s own research has indicated that the previous limit of 10 Medicare-funded psychology sessions has been inadequate for many clients”.

“We applaud the Government’s willingness to listen to consumers and providers and to make changes that will have a profound impact on those in our community experiencing the greatest need” said Associate Professor Bliokas, “In particular we acknowledge the Hon. Scott Morrison, Prime Minister, the Hon. Josh Frydenberg, Treasurer, and the Hon. Greg Hunt, Minister for Health, for this bold commitment of support to every individual Australian who needs it, and to the nation’s future prosperity collectively”.

ACPA additionally acknowledges the work of the Shadow Minister for Health, the Hon. Chris Bowen and his office, and Senator Rachel Siewert and the Australian Greens, who have also drawn attention to the critical need for additional Medicare-funded psychology sessions.

The **Australian Clinical Psychology Association (ACPA)** is a national professional body that represents clinical psychologists who hold the accredited post-graduate qualifications that meet the criteria established by the Psychology Board of Australia (PsyBA) for endorsement in clinical psychology. Clinical Psychologists are psychologists who have undertaken further and advanced accredited university training in the area of mental health diagnosis and treatment.

“ACPA urges State and Federal Governments to commit similar enhancement funding to public mental health services, which are another crucial piece of the mental health service landscape and we eagerly await the Government’s release of the Productivity Commission’s report on mental health. We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with the Government on our shared goals of streamlining mental health care and supporting access to high quality, evidence-based therapy. Ultimately, all of Australia will benefit if we improve our services in mental health”, Associate Professor Vida Bliokas said.

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