



Media Release

Tuesday 25th October, 2022

Beyond Blue welcomes funding to extend mental health coaching service for small business owners

Beyond Blue has welcomed the Federal Budget announcement of \$10.9 million to extend the availability of Beyond Blue's mental health coaching service for small business owners.

Amid growing economic pressure, the NewAccess for Small Business Owners (NASBO) service will be available for another two years, offering one-on-one support for small business owners, many of whom are still reeling from the pressures of the pandemic.

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman said the Budget's focus on issues such as housing security, employment, equality, improvements to parental leave and childcare could bring long-term benefits for the nation's mental health.

"We know structural forces have profound effects on our mental health and wellbeing, so we welcome any effort to address these social determinants and look forward to continuing to work towards substantial system reform," Ms Harman said.

"Welcome, too, is the development of a national framework for measuring wellbeing, because a nation's prosperity can't be assessed on economic data alone – understanding quality of life matters too."

The commitment to fund NASBO until 31 December 2024 comes at a crucial time for small business owners across the country and demonstrates the Commonwealth Government's recognition of the importance of early intervention in mental health system reform.

"Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, with almost 3 million registered across Australia. They make an enormous contribution to the nation's prosperity," Ms Harman said.

"But we know small business owners are facing pressure from so many directions – pandemic recovery, to looming global recession, rampant inflation, weather disasters, and supply chain and workforce shortages, to name a few.

"So, it's never been more important to offer pragmatic, accessible and low-intensity support that reflects the day-to-day realities of small business owners. Like so many of us, gaining extra skills and strategies can help us weather the storm and prevent things getting worse.

"It's promising to see the Commonwealth investing in new service models and workforces because they're vital for the reform of Australia's mental health system."

Ms Harman said Beyond Blue also looks forward to working to with the Federal Government on further structural reforms of the mental health system.

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