



Media Release

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***beyondblue* and NHMRC to fund five-year childhood adversity research**

beyondblue and the National Health and Medical Research Council will fund a five-year research initiative into the impact of childhood adversity on mental health.

The two organisations have called for research proposals under the NHMRC's Centres of Research Excellence (CRE) scheme, with applications to close at 5pm AEDT on Wednesday, December 6.

All applicants must commence their application and provide minimum data to NHMRC by 5pm AEDT on Wednesday, November 22.

There is a strong correlation between adversity in childhood and the development of mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression in adulthood.

Three million Australians live with anxiety or depression and the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows the national suicide rate remains unacceptably high.

Suicide accounted for over one third of deaths among 15 to 24-year-olds and a quarter of deaths among people aged 25 to 34.

***beyondblue* CEO Georgie Harman** said the \$2.5 million study would provide new and valuable insights into how childhood trauma, distress and disadvantage can affect a person's long-term mental health and suicide risk.

It would identify ways to prevent or minimise various childhood adversities as well as the most effective means of supporting children who have experienced hardship.

"Hardship is, unfortunately, part of everyday life for many Australian children and we know that this adversity can have a significant impact on their mental health as they become teenagers and adults," Ms Harman said.

"We want every single Australian to achieve their best possible mental health and prevention, protection, supporting individuals and families is always better than treatment or cure.

"Evidence suggests that half of all lifetime cases of mental health disorders emerge by age 14; three quarters emerge by age 24.

"We are thrilled to partner with the NHMRC on this landmark piece of work. The research we're funding with the NHMRC is about making our kids' lives better and giving them the best possible start to life so they grow up to be resilient, mentally healthy adults."

Ms Harman said the study would draw on expert knowledge from various sectors including mental health, child and family services and education as well as insights from people who have experienced mental health conditions and childhood adversity.

This is the second major research initiative *beyondblue* has funded in partnership with the NHMRC. Earlier this year, the organisations launched a jointly funded, targeted call to fund research into depression, anxiety and suicide among older Australians.

For more information about the childhood adversity research initiative, go to the NHMRC website:

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/grants-funding/apply-funding/centres-research-excellence-cre>

Mental health professionals are available 24/7 at the *beyondblue* Support Service – 1300 22 4636 or via beyondblue.org.au/get-support for online chat (3p-12am ADST) or email responses (within 24 hours).

Contact: *beyondblue*

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