**Directorate: Health**

**18/319 - Bilateral Agreement for the National Psychosocial Support Measure**

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| **Summary of Impacts** |
| * The Bilateral Agreement between the Commonwealth and the Australian Capital Territory will support the implementation of the National Psychosocial Support Measure in the ACT.
* Under this Agreement people in the ACT with a mental illness who have psychosocial functional impairment and who are deemed ineligible for support through other agencies will be able to receive support not otherwise available, which may lead to the reduction of potential gaps in current services.
* It is expected that the National Psychosocial Support Measure will have a number of positive social and economic effects for the ACT Community. It will increase the capacity of the community mental health sector and help to improve mental health outcomes and reduce inequities in service availability.
* The Measure will:
	+ support individuals to access appropriate services, reducing their reliance on clinical services;
	+ uphold the rights of people with psychosocial disability, who are ineligible under the NDIS, to have access to appropriate services;
	+ over time, reduce the demand for acute care services, which is expected to increase the efficiency of health resourcing;
	+ improve the economic and workforce participation of people with psychosocial disability; and
	+ see an increased investment in Non-Government Organisations, through the commissioning of services by the Capital Health Network (CHN).
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*Key to impacts: Red – negative, Blue – neutral and Green – positive.*

**Social**

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| **Health** | * The benefits of the Psychosocial Support Measure for the target group will be improved psychosocial functioning that can be associated with a positive impact on people accessing health services and managing their mental and physical health more effectively. The relatively poor physical health outcomes for people with severe mental illness are now widely recognised and have been prioritised for action under the 5th National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan.
* The functional impairments and social exclusion associated with severe mental illness have a significant impact on an individual’s connection to valued social networks and their participation in the ACT community. The Psychosocial Support Measure will increase the capacity of the ACT mental health sector to respond to people who face these challenges but are not eligible for support under the NDIS. Providing adequate psychosocial supports to people can play a significant role in promoting recovery and decreasing reliance on clinical services as well as benefit the wider community through increased productivity and participation.
* The CHN Psychosocial Support program will commission non-clinical mental health services for individuals with psychosocial functional impairment. The range of psychosocial supports funded may include individual and group support and rehabilitation services and peer work. The type of supports available will reflect the needs of the local community.
* Providing psychosocial support services to individuals who currently have limited or no psychosocial support will positively affect the health and well-being of the individual and also their carers, family, friends and the wider ACT Community.
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| **Justice and rights** | * The Psychosocial Support Measure aims to provide funds to address the emerging gap in access to psychosocial support services. Currently, in the NDIS, the criteria for the permanence and severity of one’s disability presents challenges for the eligibility of people with psychosocial disability. Improving access under this measure will help to ensure that the rights of this population are upheld.
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**Economic**

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| **ACT Government Budget** | * The agreement is expected to provide a number of positive flow-on economic impacts.
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| **Productivity** | * For people with severe mental illness, the associated functional impairments and social exclusion have a significant impact on their economic participation. The psychosocial services funded through this agreement are intended to provide supports for individuals and improve their capacity to live fulfilling and “contributing lives”[[1]](#footnote-1). This positive impact also is expected to effect the wellbeing of family, carers and friends. This flow on effect is anticipated to have a positive influence on mental illness rates and therefore workforce and community participation[[2]](#footnote-2).
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| **Investment** | * This investment in psychosocial support services is expected to have positive impacts on a broad range of mental health service costs especially secondary and tertiary health services by reducing avoidable emergency department presentations and hospital admissions 2.
* CHN commissioning of services could lead to investment in community Non-Government Organisations.
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| **Competition** | * Impacts on competition have been considered and no impacts have been identified.
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**Environmental**

No impact.

1. ## Contributing Lives, Thriving Communities - Report of the National Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services, National Mental Health Commission - 2014

 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Investing to Save: The Economic Benefits for Australia of Investment in Mental Health Reform, Mental Health Australia and KPMG - 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)