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Mental Health Falls Short

The Mental Health Coalition of South Australia welcomes the State Government's investment of \$8.7m over four years for mental health respite services in Whyalla as well as the continued funding of 10 forensic step down beds at Oakden.

However this funding announcement falls short of the \$20m South Australian mental health services have lost since the end of two Commonwealth State Agreements on 30th June.

Other services funded by the Commonwealth States agreements included:

- 24 crisis respite beds and 10 in-home beds across metropolitan Adelaide;
- Intensive Home-Based Support Service;
- 10 mental health community rehabilitation beds in Mt Gambier;
- Walk in Service at Salisbury;
- After-hours acute 24/7 community service.

The Crisis Respite service was a strong partnership between a mental health NGO and SA Health that supported 2000 people by avoiding an emergency or short stay acute admission. While the IHBSS program provided intensive rehabilitation support for people for a period of up to 3 months.

"We have been asking both the Commonwealth and the State governments to find a way to reinstate successful programs that have been cut," said Geoff Harris, Executive Director of Mental Health Coalition of SA.

"We were disappointed to see only a partial recovery in today's budget."

The Mental Health Coalition of SA believes that without setting goals around mental health it will continue to be forgotten.

"Not only do we need funding we need the State government to set targets around mental health to make sure we stop being forgotten. Setting targets includes decent housing, employment, physical health and quality of life. Measuring of our effectiveness in these areas would give us a better focus to

continually improve our mental health services in terms of outcomes for everyone.”

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