

Australia to roll out COVID-19 mental health campaign with \$10M investment

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The campaign, How's Your Head Today? urge people to prioritize, recognize, analyze personal mental health and to encourage others to seek assistance

The Australian Government will roll out a COVID-19 mental health campaign **How's your head today?** to urge people to prioritise their mental health, raise awareness about how to identify when something is wrong, and encourage people to seek help.

The campaign will be launched on TV, radio, in shopping centres and venues, online and through social media from Sunday and will continue through to next year.

How's your head today? encourages all Australians to check in with how they are feeling. Through animated characters, the campaign recognises the emotions many people are feeling and illustrates the actions they can take to help themselves feel better.

The campaign will be provided in 15 languages across radio and print including Vietnamese, Arabic, Mandarin, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Korean, Spanish, Punjabi, Hindi, Khmer, Thai, Turkish, Persian and Macedonian.

The local entities, Lifeline and Beyond Blue are reporting a significant increase in the number of people seeking help, and for more complex issues. The mental health impact of the pandemic is also borne out by Medicare statistics, which show significant uptake of mental health telehealth services.

Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, said, "I encourage all Australians to seek help if experiencing mental ill-health. Talk to your

GP, reach out to Beyond Blue or Lifeline, or visit **Headtohealth.gov.au**. Ten additional Medicare subsidized psychological therapy sessions are available for people subjected to further restrictions in areas impacted by the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Victorians can also access free-of-charge 15 HeadtoHelp centres across the state, or visit Headtohelp.org.au.”

National Mental Health Commission CEO, Christine Morgan says, “Staying connected to your loved ones and your community is fundamental to your mental health and wellbeing at the moment. It is one of the proactive tasks that is important for all of us to do each and every day. If you notice that someone has disconnected, reach out and ask them how they are doing as we walk together, side by side over the coming months.”

The Head to Health website has information, advice and links to free and low cost phone and online mental health services from some of Australia’s most trusted mental health organisations.

Head to Health has been an important resource supporting Australians during the COVID-19 pandemic, and significant increased traffic (380,308 unique page views, 2,873 total sessions) has continued since March when a dedicated COVID area was introduced.

The Australian Government has allocated \$10 million to support the How’s your head today? campaign, and will continue to prioritise mental health and suicide prevention services.

Since March 2020, the Government has made available more than \$500 million in funding for direct supports to respond to the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with \$10 million allocated to this national mental health communications campaign.

For information, advice and support services visit headtohealth.gov.au

Campaign materials are available at <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-men...>