



Dominic Perrottet
Treasurer
Minister for Industrial Relations

MEDIA RELEASE

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MENTAL HEALTH BENEFIT BOOST TO SMALL BUSINESSES

A \$1.1 million seed funding contribution from the icare foundation will enable the Hunter Institute of Mental Health to work with small business owners in the Hunter region to find better ways to support the mental health and wellbeing of small business owners and their staff.

Treasurer Dominic Perrottet said, "Nothing is more important for any business than making sure its employees are supported in their physical and mental wellbeing".

"Many larger organisations have the resources to support their staff, but managing mental health and wellbeing is just as important for smaller employers who may not have the same resources at their disposal," he said.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter Scot MacDonald said, "Having run a small business with my wife for 20 years, I can attest there simply aren't the resources within most of our enterprises to support business owners and their staff as best as possible.

"Small businesses are the lifeblood of the Hunter region. Anything we can do to help the owners and the staff ensure they both have strong mental health is welcome."

icare Foundation Chair Elizabeth Carr AM said small business owners face unique mental health risks which largely go unidentified.

"Our partnership with the Hunter Institute is just the beginning of a concerted push by icare to equip small business owners to identify, prevent and manage employee mental health challenges earlier", Ms Carr said.

The new program of work will include an 18-month trial, open to more than 45,000 small businesses in the Hunter and Newcastle region and, if successful, will be rolled out to small businesses statewide.

The program is one of a number of initiatives the NSW Government is currently developing to best support the mental health of workers across the state.

The Hunter Institute has a partnership approach to solving mental health issues and works with peak bodies, such as business chambers and regional health networks, to engage directly with businesses to identify and develop new approaches that put the mental health of small business staff front and centre.

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