



Dominic Perrottet
Treasurer

Bronnie Taylor
Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women

MEDIA RELEASE

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\$36.4 MILLION FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IN THE BUSH

Regional and Rural communities facing ongoing adversity in the wake of natural disasters will have access to more mental health support than ever before.

Treasurer Dominic Perrottet and Minister for Mental Health Bronnie Taylor today announced a \$36.4m package for Response and Recovery Specialists across regional and rural NSW will be included in the 2021-22 NSW Budget.

Mr Perrottet said this announcement continues the NSW Government's significant investment in mental health services, including a record \$2.4 billion in last year's budget.

"We know families and people have been doing it tough in these areas, facing drought, bushfires, COVID-19 and now a mice plague, and this package will offer continued mental health support to those in need," Mr Perrottet said.

"We want to ensure people not only get help at the time of a disaster, but that it's accessible during the recovery phase so communities can bounce back and people can rebuild lives."

Minister for Mental Health Bronnie Taylor said 57 Response and Recovery Specialists would ensure quality services were available at all times.

"When the unprecedented drought and bushfires were crippling our state, these counsellors were there to support communities and now they're on hand to help those affected by other disasters like the mice plague too." Mrs Taylor said.

The Response and Recovery Specialists provide mental health counselling, coordination with local services and communities and ongoing support to individuals and their families at locations of their choosing, whether at home or in the local cafe.

"The best thing about these extra 57 mental health specialists is people don't need to go to their GP to be referred. They can access them through the mental health line or other local services.

"What's unique about these roles is that the people that undertake this work as counsellors are members of their communities and they can provide local insight, as well as a friendly soft entry to mental health support," Mrs Taylor said.

"This is particularly important for people who are so used to facing significant adversity that they may hesitate to seek help when they need it."

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