

ESSA FOR AN ACTIVE NATION

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



WHAT IS NEEDED?

A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES THAT:

- Delivers levels of funding appropriate for the best individual care, when and where they need it.
- Addresses mental health service and best practice gaps in Australia, providing a fair go for people experiencing mental illness.
- Empowers a strong health system that puts individuals at the centre of care.



WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

MENTAL ILLNESS IS A LARGE BURDEN ON OUR COMMUNITIES:

- In any given year, 20% of the Australian population will experience mental illness.
- Physical inactivity is the cause of approximately 9% of premature mortality worldwide, with people experiencing a mental illness particularly susceptible.

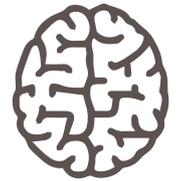
PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS EXPERIENCE POORER PHYSICAL HEALTH:

- People with severe mental illness live between 10-32 years less than the general population. A major contributing factor to this lower life expectancy is poor physical health and higher rates of chronic illnesses, such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

CURRENT FUNDING MODELS DO NOT SUPPORT WIDE-SPREAD ACCESS TO LIFESTYLE INTERVENTIONS, SUCH AS EXERCISE, AS AN INTEGRATED COMPONENT OF ROUTINE CARE:

- Exercise and diet are core lifestyle interventions in the prevention and management of physical health conditions in the general population.
- Limited dedicated funding exists to support people to exercise when they are experiencing a mental illness.
- Notably, for every case of depression that is averted through exercise, society saves \$10,062 per year. The direct savings to the consumer are approx. \$6,025 per year.

THE COST OF INACTION



ECONOMIC IMPACT
of mental illness on Australian society **IS HIGH.**



Inaction on mental illness costs
AUSTRALIAN BUSINESSES
\$10.9 BILLION PER YEAR.



Total cost to community is
estimated to be approx.
\$60 BILLION PER YEAR.

WORLDWIDE, 8 MILLION PEOPLE DIE EARLY
EVERY YEAR DUE TO MENTAL ILLNESS.

However, a considerable number of these deaths
are not due to mental illness but from physical health
problems such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes.



WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

- Increase access to lifestyle interventions, such as exercise and diet, as part of normal care for people living with mental illness.
- Regular screening and ongoing monitoring of both physical and mental health for people experiencing mental illness.
- Dedicated funding and improved referral pathways that support targeted access to exercise interventions as part of standard care.
- Support consumer and carer engagement in mental health services to build a system that places the person at the centre of care and helps them better manage their own health.

ABOUT EXERCISE & SPORTS SCIENCE AUSTRALIA

Exercise & Sports Science Australia (ESSA) is the nation's peak body and professional association representing over 6,000 members, including university trained Accredited Exercise Physiologists (AEP), Accredited Exercise Scientists (AES) and Accredited Sports Scientists (ASpS). This exercise and sports science workforce successfully plays a pivotal role in addressing the health risks and challenges faced by many Australians.

As a leading voice in exercise, physical activity and sport over the last two decades, ESSA together with our members, strives to implement our vision of achieving member excellence in exercise and sports science that will enrich the health and performance of every Australian.

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