



MEDIA RELEASE

National Mental Health Consumer Alliance (NMHCA)

13 May 2026

\$6 billion investment in Foundational Supports must be designed with mental health consumers

The 2026–27 Federal Budget confirms the status quo with \$3 billion Commonwealth commitment to Foundational Supports outside the NDIS, to be matched by state and territory governments: a potential \$6 billion investment that must include the psychosocial supports mental health consumers have been calling for over many years.

However, the detail of these supports for the half a million Australians living without any psychosocial support remains unclear. What they are, who delivers them, how people access them, whether they will be there when people need them, and equity across states and territories, has not yet been designed.

The National Mental Health Consumer Alliance is calling on Commonwealth, state and territory governments to design these supports together with the mental health consumers who need them.

Nothing about us, without us

Psychosocial supports designed without consumers do not work. Designed with consumers, they can transform lives. This is the consistent finding of every major review of the mental health system over the past three decades, from the 1993 Burdekin Report to the 2020 and 2025 Productivity Commission Review.

The Alliance is ready to do the work, both through the next National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement and through direct engagement with Commonwealth and state/territory governments, to ensure psychosocial supports are universally available for those who need them.

The NDIS cuts are causing serious distress

The recently announced \$37 billion in cuts to NDIS are causing significant and widespread distress among people with psychosocial disability. People who currently rely on the Scheme are being told their supports will change, without yet being told what will replace them, when, or whether they will be eligible. This is not a safe or credible reform pathway.

The Alliance is calling for a clear and non-negotiable principle: the Foundational Supports that are intended to replace NDIS-funded psychosocial supports must be designed, funded, and operational before any NDIS changes affect people currently receiving them. No one should fall into the gap between what is being taken away and what is yet to be built.



What designing it properly requires

With resourcing that is sustained, predictable, and commensurate with the scale of the design task ahead, the Alliance and each of its state and territory peak members are best positioned to lead consumer design of Foundational Supports for psychosocial disability. Consumer engagement must begin now and not after governments have agreed to the design between themselves.

We acknowledge the six-month extension we received in the 2025 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) to June 2027. However, national lived experience representation cannot be delivered through six-month extensions during the most significant mental health and disability reform period in a generation. The Alliance calls on the Government to confirm in MYEFO later this year a three-to-five-year extension of the Alliance's peak funding.

Without ongoing funding beyond the next 12 months, national lived experience representation and leadership will be uncertain and short-term resulting in a mental health system that is not designed, developed or governed by people with lived experience of mental health challenges.

The Alliance is pleased that additional funding of \$15.9 million over four years has been committed to Disability Representative Organisations (including the Alliance) which is aimed at supporting engagement in the upcoming NDIS reform process.

****Quote from Mathew Fagan, Chairperson, NMHCA****

"The Budget confirms \$6 billion is on the table. What it actually delivers for mental health consumers depends entirely on whether we are at the design table from the start. Nothing about us, without us is not a slogan: it is the difference between supports that work and supports that don't."

****Quotes from Priscilla Brice, CEO, NMHCA****

"On the topic of mental health, this budget is deeply irresponsible, with no new funding for mental health care."

"People with psychosocial disability are already telling us they are frightened by what the NDIS changes will mean for them. They deserve to know what is being built before what they rely on is taken away. The Alliance is ready to work with governments to make sure that happens."

****ENDS****

Media enquiries:

Priscilla Brice, CEO, NMHCA, Email: ceo@nmhca.org.au

Katinka Winston-Allom, Executive Assistance, NMHCA, Email: admin@nmhca.org.au, Phone: 0404 378 886