

MEDIA RELEASE

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Mental health report card evidence of a failing system

The [National Mental Health Commission's 2024 Report Card](#), revealing that more than one in five Australians have delayed seeing a mental health professional due to cost, is concrete evidence of a mental health system that is failing the community, according to the peak body for all psychologists.

Australian Association of Psychologists Executive Director Tegan Carrison said the findings were proof that Medicare rebates for psychologists needed to rise and that session numbers needed to increase to ensure people had equitable access to the mental health care they need.

"This report has confirmed what our psychologists are seeing in daily practice - that they are rationing their mental health care, or often just cancelling altogether because they are having to choose between an appointment or putting food on the table," she said.

"Our most recent survey showed that 96% of psychologists in private practice had to turn away clients or delay care due to financial barriers.

"Increasing the rebate for all psychology sessions to a realistic amount of \$150, at least in line with the cost of living, would dramatically improve affordability and access for everyone, especially for vulnerable people.

"A Medicare card is only worth its weight if it gives you a decent rebate and the rebates for psychology appointments have been too low for too many years.

"Again, we call on the Government for deep, long-term investment into the mental health system, which is crucial in creating more affordable and accessible care.

"Walk-in centres are not the answer for complex mental health issues and ongoing psychological care, and you need to win the postcode lottery to get access to a centre."

About the Australian Association of Psychologists Inc (AAPi)

The AAPi is a not-for-profit peak body for all psychologists that aims to preserve the rich diversity of psychological practice in Australia. Formed in 2010 by a group of passionate grassroots psychologists, the AAPi's primary goal is to address inequality in the profession and represent all psychologists and their clients equally to government and funding bodies. Its primary mission is to lobby for equitable access for the Australian public to professional psychological services such as Medicare Better Access Scheme and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.