



Media release

Monday 17 February 2025

Government turns back on 25,000 patients & experts

More than 25,000 mental health patients and psychology experts from nine peak agencies have presented a petition to Health Minister Mark Butler. The petition calls for an end to the 10 session cap on Medicare-rebated psychology sessions, a policy the government has remained steadfast on, despite announcements from other major parties that they support more care for patients and will remove the cap if elected.

Psychologists from nine peak organisations formed an unprecedented coalition to launch the petition saying it robs patients with complex mental health issues or a history of trauma, of the care they need.

Australian Clinical Psychology Association President Prof Caroline Hunt said; “Psychologists have been in constant contact with politicians since 2022 when access to care was halved from 20 sessions to 10 in an effort to negotiate more care for patients with complex needs.”

“The Government’s 10-session cap turns mental healthcare into a one size fits all care model that miserably fails the most vulnerable.”

Lived Experience Australia CEO Sharon Lawn said; “Arbitrary session limits on care can really harm patients. They might become more unwell, forgo necessary care or, make difficult and sometimes unhealthy financial choices about funding psychology care privately.

“We are now entering the third year where the government has failed to provide a pathway for care for the most unwell mental health patients and ignored the calls of mental health experts.”

In the letter presenting the petition to Butler the coalition pointed to [recent research](#) published in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry showing brief psychological intervention models, such as headspace, fail around 75% of patients and more substantive care is needed.

Australian Psychological Society President Dr Sara Quinn said; “Every Australian deserves to receive financial support under Medicare for the amount of treatment they need as assessed by their mental health provider.”

Australian Association of Psychologists Inc Executive Director Tegan Carrison said recent Productivity Commission figures showing reduced access since the 10-session cap was introduced were further proof that people were being denied the mental health care they so badly needed.

“A limit on care for a person with complex mental health needs puts a limit on their healing. A patient must be able to access the necessary treatment to improve their health and well being.”

The public is urged to [sign the petition](#) and demand the government finally listen to patients, their families and expert health teams and increase Medicare-rebated psychology care for patients who need it.

A COALITION OF EXPERTS AND PATIENTS

Mental health patients and psychology organisations have formed a united coalition of nine peak agencies and begun a petition to address the ongoing shortfall in Medicare-rebated psychology care available to Australians. The agencies, who hope other professionals will join them, say the 10-session Medicare rebate cap on psychology care robs people of essential care. The coalition is calling for more Medicare-rebated psychology sessions for those who need it.

Psychology Coalition Members

- Consumer advocacy organisation Lived Experience Australia
- Australian Clinical Psychology Association
- Australian Psychological Society
- Institute of Clinical Psychologists
- Association of Counselling Psychologists
- Australian Association of Psychologists Inc
- Institute of Private Practicing Psychologists
- Australian Educational and Developmental Psychologists Association
- Heads of Departments and Schools of Psychology Association

Sign the petition today <https://chnng.it/zTNJLn47Sx>

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