



Media Release

The Future We Choose: New Beyond Blue report explores the forces shaping the next decade of mental health in Australia

Beyond Blue has launched *The Future We Choose: Mental health support in Australia through the next decade of change*, a new strategic foresight report by Australia's national science agency, CSIRO, exploring how mental health in Australia may evolve over the next decade and the choices that could help shape a stronger, more connected and resilient future.

While mental health awareness and literacy have improved and more Australians are seeking support than ever before, there is still a major help-seeking gap as demand continues to outpace supply while workforce shortages, cost barriers and challenges accessing support continue. At the same time, rapid social, technological, economic and environmental change are reshaping how people experience mental health and mental ill health, seek support and access information, raising important questions about whether today's systems are equipped for the future.

Commissioned by Beyond Blue to mark its 25th year using CSIRO's strategic foresight methodology, the report examines the forces shaping the future of mental health in Australia. It presents four possible scenarios and identifies five shifts focused on prevention, community connection, trusted technology, easier navigation and earlier support to help Australia move from a system defined by crisis response towards one that is more preventative, connected, trusted and adaptive.

Beyond Blue Chair the Hon. Linda Dessau AC CVO said the report reflects Beyond Blue's commitment to helping Australia prepare for the future of mental health.

"For 25 years, Beyond Blue has helped lead national conversations about mental health; improving literacy, reducing stigma, providing novel service options, and encouraging earlier support seeking. Just as Beyond Blue helped change the conversation about mental health when it was founded, this report signals a new conversation about the future we want to create and the choices that will help us get there."

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman AO said the report was designed to help Australia understand the choices that will shape mental health over the next decade.

"The conditions shaping mental health are changing rapidly, yet many of the challenges facing Australians today remain stubbornly familiar," Ms Harman said.

"The Future We Choose highlights two uncertainties that will influence how mental health evolves in the next decade: whether technology becomes a trusted enabler of mental health, and whether the relationships and support systems we rely on grow stronger or come under greater strain.



"By exploring these possibilities, the report reinforces the system changes needed to move towards a future where trusted technology, strong communities and accessible support work together to improve mental health and wellbeing – a roadmap to a future where everyone in Australia can thrive."

The report's methodology, including horizon scanning, stakeholder consultations and scenario planning, suggests Australia is currently heading towards a future where demand grows, support is stretched and trust and connection are harder to maintain.

Importantly, the report also shows this trajectory is not fixed and that different futures are possible depending on the interplay of trends and the choices made today.

Lead report author and CSIRO Senior Research Scientist Dr Alexandra Bratanova said the research was not intended to predict a single future, but to help decision-makers prepare for multiple possibilities.

"Strategic foresight isn't about forecasting exactly what will happen next. It's about exploring plausible futures, challenging assumptions and helping organisations and leaders make better decisions today," said Dr Bratanova.

"The report identifies a range of social, technological, economic, environmental and geopolitical forces that are already shaping mental health and wellbeing to better understand the risks, opportunities and choices that could influence Australia's mental health future."

Ms Harman adds; "The central message of this report is simple: the future is not fixed."

"This report isn't about predicting the future. It's about helping Australia prepare for it. The future of mental health won't be shaped by any single organisation, government or sector. It will be shaped by the vision we collectively hold for the wellbeing of future generations, and the choices we make together – with communities – to move toward it, starting now."

The Future We Choose: Mental health support in Australia through the next decade of change was launched at Australian Parliament House on 9 September, bringing together people with lived and living experience, and decision-makers from government, research, business, and community organisations to consider the choices, partnerships and system settings needed to support the mental health and wellbeing of future generations.

If you or someone you know is struggling, Beyond Blue's free, confidential Support Service is available 24/7 on 1300 22 4636 or via webchat at www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support.

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A report summary is available [here](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/about/research-projects), and the full report is available for download on the Beyond Blue website: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/about/research-projects>

Available for interviews:

- Beyond Blue CEO, Georgie Harman AO
- Lead report author and CSIRO senior research scientist, Dr Alexandra Bratanova



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About Beyond Blue

Beyond Blue provides mental health information, support and advice to help everyone feel better earlier and stay well. Last year more than 300,000 people contacted Beyond Blue's free, confidential, 24/7 Support Service. Call 1300 22 4636 or visit www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support.

About CSIRO

As Australia's national science agency, CSIRO solves the greatest challenges through science and technology. From a century of historic breakthroughs like Wi-Fi and polymer banknotes to emerging innovations in AI, quantum, and health, CSIRO delivers the science Australians need for the nation they want – productive, sustainable, healthy and secure.

****Note to editor - methodology***

Commissioned by Beyond Blue and informed by CSIRO's strategic foresight methodology, the report explores how Australia's mental health landscape may evolve over the next decade. It combines horizon scanning, stakeholder consultations and scenario planning to examine the forces shaping mental health and wellbeing, and the choices that could influence Australia's future.