

11 February 2026

## Renewed Federal Government support strengthens mental health assistance for small business owners

**Beyond Blue welcomes the Federal Government's decision to continue its support of the small business community granting a one-year extension of the successful NewAccess for Small Business Owners (NASBO) service to 30 June 2027.**

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman AO said the Government's decision, announced by Small Business Minister Anne Aly earlier today, showed clear understanding of the mental health pressures experienced by small business owners.

"Small business owners often carry enormous responsibility, and the emotional and financial pressures can be relentless. This continued support shows the Government recognises those challenges and values the wellbeing of the people who keep our communities and local economies moving," Ms Harman said.

"NASBO gives business owners a chance to pause, reflect and learn strategies that help them manage stress and stay focused. It's flexible, it's practical, and it's designed specifically for the small business environment."

As an evidence-based mental health service, NASBO has achieved consistently strong results: 76 per cent of small business owners who participated showed clinically significant improvement in their symptoms of anxiety and/or depression, more than 91 per cent felt more productive and better able to address future business challenges, and nearly 96 per cent felt better able to manage mental health challenges when they arose.

NASBO support is available to small business owners nationally from 8am to 8pm. It uses evidence-based low-intensity cognitive behavioural therapy and offers small business owners up to six sessions and two follow-up sessions, working with a specialist coach with small business experience. Participation is free, confidential and no GP referral is required.

Since NASBO's launch in 2021, almost 10,000 small business owners across Australia have accessed support to build their capability to manage stress and maintain productivity.

Ms Harman said the program's extension would allow Beyond Blue to keep providing specialised support to people who feel overwhelmed by rising costs, business uncertainty or personal pressures.

"Many small business owners tell us they reach out when they're exhausted and unsure how to move forward. NASBO helps them regain clarity and confidence at the time when they need it most," she said.

"We regularly hear from participants who say the service has helped them steady the ship and feel more productive. More than nine in ten tell us it helped them better understand and address their challenges."

NASBO provides practical one-on-one mental health coaching tailored to the needs of small business owners, along with connections to other support services such as financial counselling where appropriate.

Self-employed small business owner Meg Stewart turned to NASBO when the demands of running a business with her husband, while also raising two young children, left her feeling stretched too thin.

“I was overwhelmed,” says Meg, “All I did was work, I was doing nothing for me.”

NASBO coaching gave Meg space to step back and rethink how she was approaching both her work and her wellbeing.

It helped her recognise unhelpful patterns and build practical habits that made running the business feel more manageable.

“The coaching helped me feel more in control, and it reminded me that what I’m doing really is enough. I’ve learned to ease the pressure I put on myself.

“It’s not something that fades once the sessions end; the skills really stick with you – it’s a lifestyle change.”

Small business owners who are interested to know more can visit [www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/newaccess-mental-health-coaching/small-business-owners](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/newaccess-mental-health-coaching/small-business-owners) or call **03 9250 8305**.

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**For more information or to schedule interviews, please contact:**

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### **About Beyond Blue**

Beyond Blue provides mental health support and advocacy to help everyone who needs help to feel better earlier and stay well. Last year more than 300,000 people contacted our free, confidential, 24/7 Support Service. Call 1300 22 4636 or visit [www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support).