

1 December 2022

## YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH IN GUNG AHLIN

**ACT Labor MLA for Yerrabi Michael Pettersson will today introduce a motion to the ACT Legislative Assembly calling for a renewed focus on youth mental health in Gungahlin.**

I have heard from many of my young constituents that they want access to timely and appropriate mental healthcare services in their local area. Unfortunately, they face challenges in accessing the most appropriate mental health service because Gungahlin does not have the same services as other regions in Canberra.

For Gungahlin residents seeking access to headspace services they must travel to Canberra City or Tuggeranong to get assistance. For those seeking a specialist psychiatrist appointment, they report being forced to travel to regional NSW or Sydney to access specialist services in a timely manner. Frustratingly, some of these young people have shared with me that these barriers have felt so insurmountable that they have given up on getting help altogether. I believe we can do better for Gungahlin's young people and provide more services closer to their home.

To address these issues, the motion I am moving today calls on the ACT Government to advocate for the federal government to fund a headspace located in Gungahlin, as well as to provide:

- an update on the timeline for implementation of Orygen's MOST platform in the ACT;
- an analysis of how the ACT Mental Health Workforce Strategy aligns with the National Mental Health Workforce Strategy and compares to other jurisdictions, including intended outcomes for peer support workers;
- an update to the Assembly on the implementation of the Position Statement on Youth Mental Health Recovery from COVID-19 and advise how youth mental health in this post-lockdown period is responding;
- an update on mental health supports being considered for young Canberrans that could contribute to reduced wait lists and duration of treatment for mild to moderate mental health conditions and the Missing Middle; and
- suitable social and recreational spaces for young people in Gungahlin where they can develop their physical, social, emotional, and cognitive abilities.

Bolstering the mental health services available to young people in Gungahlin and driving action to support a highly skilled mental health workforce is one of my key priorities.

I am hopeful that my Assembly colleagues will join me today in supporting a renewed focus on youth mental health in Gungahlin.

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