

TREASURER TOM KOUTSANTONIS

Thursday, 7 July 2016

\$111 million to support vulnerable South Australians

The State Government has allocated \$110 million in today's Budget to support vulnerable South Australians including people living with a disability, those with a mental illness and others on fixed or low incomes.

The Budget includes an additional \$50 million to support the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and a further \$40.5 million for people living with a disability to access services including accommodation support, community access and respite services.

The State Government will spend also \$12 million on the full automation of the new Cost of Living Concession. This concession replaces the council rate concession the Federal Government cut and it now applies to renters as well as homeowners.

The Budget will also include \$8.7 million to fund mental health respite services in Whyalla following the Federal Government's refusal to renew national partnership agreements on mental health.

Background

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The South Australian Government has signed up to the full National Disability Insurance Scheme which will mean significant, positive change for the disability services sector.

From 1 July 2018, the NDIS will be open to all eligible South Australians with disability - estimated to be around 32,000 people.

By 2018-19, the NDIS will be fully implemented in South Australia with the State Government's contribution \$723 million in 2018-19 (indexed after that), about half of the total yearly spend.

Cost of Living Concession

The State Government introduced the Cost of Living Concession on 1 July 2015 to assist low or fixed income households with their cost of living expenses.



Households can use this concession for any cost of living expense. Unlike the former council rates concession, the Cost of Living Concession is available to tenants as well as homeowner occupiers.

Mental health respite services in Whyalla

The State Government has stepped in to ensure vital mental health services in Whyalla and Adelaide continue despite funding cuts by the Federal Government.

This Budget has allocated \$8.5 million over four years to restore mental health services in Whyalla which were scheduled to close on June 30.

The State Government will also fund the 10 forensic mental health step down beds at Oakden, which were also impacted by the \$20 million in annual cuts made by the Commonwealth.

Quotes attributable to Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis

The South Australian Government is committed to ensuring everyone in our community receives a fair go.

This is why South Australia was among the first jurisdictions to sign up to the NDIS, providing \$723 million annually when the scheme is fully operational.

And it is the reason we have stepped in to ensure vital mental health services continue in regional South Australia after the Turnbull Government cut \$20 million annually from the State's mental health system.

On 1 July 2015, we introduced the new Cost of Living Concession for South Australians on low or fixed incomes to assist with their cost of living expenses.

Unlike the former council rates concession which was cut by the Federal Government, the Cost of Living Concession is available to tenants as well as homeowner occupiers.

This increase brings utilities and living cost concessions for pensioners and other eligible low-income earners to a maximum of \$866 each year.

Quotes attributable to Communities and Social Inclusion Minister Zoe Bettison

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Quotes attributable to Disabilities Minister Leesa Vlahos

The State Government has stepped in to ensure vital mental health services continue in regional South Australia after the Turnbull Government cut \$20 million annually from the State's mental health system.

Now is not the time to be cutting mental health services in the Mid-North and this is why mental health services in Whyalla affected by the Turnbull Government's cuts will be restored.

This will relieve pressure on mental health service providers that rely on highly trained staff to run these services, allowing them to confidently plan ahead.

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