

# Australian Medical Research and Innovation Two Year Priorities

**Title:** Integrating research and clinical practice in the domain of mental health

**Submitted by:** The Psychology Foundation of Australia

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**1. What is the gap in Australia's health system to be addressed by this priority?**

This priority will close the gap between research excellence and clinical service delivery for mental health.

**2. How does your area of priority address either an existing or a new health or health system challenge?**

Australia generates world-leading research in mental health but this research is often done outside of mental health service delivery contexts, limiting its immediate relevance and making translation a challenge.

**3. Comment on which aims and objectives your priority is likely to meet.**

Integrating research and clinical practice in the domain of mental health will *increase collaboration and integration* as well as creating *pathways for efficient translation* of research outcomes for *high-quality, cost-effective health care*.

**4. Mandatory considerations – which of the mandatory considerations set out in the Medical Research Future Fund Act (2015) does your priority proposal address?**

- Burden of disease on the Australian Community
- How to deliver practical benefits from medical research and medical innovation to as many Australians as possible
- How to ensure that financial assistance provides that greatest value for all Australians
- How to ensure that disbursements complement and enhance other assistance provided to the sector

**5. Outline of priority proposal:**

The goal of this priority is to establish collaborative consortia of mental health service providers, universities, and research institutes to embed world-leading mental health research into the health service delivery sector. Much as the Australian Research Council's Linkage schemes have done, these consortia will generate new service delivery-led research partnerships that will focus on translation.

This priority will develop themes to create and implement world-leading mental health research programs within the health service sector to address clinically driven problems that will lead to optimal patient outcomes. Potential themes will be informed by the major societal demands for treatment and prevention in the domain of mental health and might include:

- (a) Post-hospital treatment for complex chronic mental health patients. Up to 20% of patients admitted to acute psychiatric units are re-admitted within 30 days and over half are re-admitted within a year. This theme would focus on clinical science and service delivery to achieve sustainable and economical outcomes for this population.
- (b) Healthy brain ageing. In the context of an ageing population this theme would focus on maintenance of a healthy brain and mind across the different stages of life.

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(c) Inter-professional mental health service delivery. This theme would focus on integration of mental health services across the disciplines of psychiatry, psychology, therapies and nursing, to generate models for world-leading innovative mental health services across multiple delivery contexts.

## 6. What measures of success do you propose and what will be the impact on health care consumers?

The KPIs for this priority would include:

- (a) the development of consortia involving mental health service providers, universities, medical research institutes
- (b) the development of inter-professional assessment and referral clinics for complex chronic mental health patients
- (c) the development of inter-professional assessment and referral clinics for healthy brain ageing

## 7. Please outline any linkages your proposal has with stakeholders, policy agendas and other health and medical research funding agencies.

As a broad priority addressing mental health in Australia, this proposal has links across many of the stakeholders outlined in the Call for Submissions Paper. It is consistent with funding priorities of the NHMRC, and with biomedical and health-related elements of the National Science and Innovation agenda and the National Science and Research priorities. The priority is also aligned with National Report Cards on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention developed by the National Mental Health Commission.