



# New Mental Health Assessment Units

next to our Emergency Departments

South  
Australian  
**Labor**

For the  
Future

# Foreword

We take mental health seriously – and we knew that the task to make a meaningful difference to mental health services would require significant investment.

That's why the Malinauskas Labor Government has made a generational investment of \$2.5 billion in mental health – a 30 percent increase, when compared to the Liberals' four-year term.

We needed more beds, more staff and more accessible community services - and we've gotten on with it.

**With more than 130 new mental health beds steadily coming online, we're delivering a massive 25 percent increase in inpatient mental health capacity – the single largest investment into mental health in South Australia's history.**

We have recruited 100 new mental health and learning support specialists to work in our public schools, and hundreds more mental health clinicians in hospitals and community settings across the state.

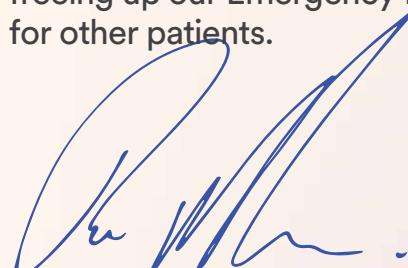
We will continue to invest in mental health, so that South Australians feel safe going to hospital and are treated in the right place, by the right clinicians.

The Royal Adelaide Hospital is the focal point for mental health demand – having seen nearly 6,000 presentations due to mental health in the past 12 months. In a number of these cases, there is also an intersection with drug and alcohol use.

Too many of these patients end up staying longer than they need to in the emergency department, which is not a purpose-built environment for mental health.

**That's why the Malinauskas Labor Government will take to the election our plan to construct three New Mental Health Assessment Units next to the Royal Adelaide, Noarlunga and Lyell McEwin Hospital emergency departments.**

The new units will provide a new space to help people experiencing a mental health or drug and alcohol related crisis, redirecting them to a more appropriate health setting - providing better care for these patients, reducing disruption, and freeing up our Emergency Departments for other patients.



Peter Malinauskas MP  
Premier for South Australia



**Labor will build three  
new Mental Health  
Assessment Units  
next to:**

**1 Royal Adelaide Hospital  
Emergency Department**

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**2 Lyell McEwin Hospital  
Emergency Department**

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**3 Noarlunga Hospital  
Emergency Department**

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Royal Adelaide Hospital



Lyell McEwin Hospital





Noarlunga Hospital

# New Mental Health Assessment Units next to the Royal Adelaide Hospital, Noarlunga Hospital and Lyell McEwin Hospital Emergency Departments

Emergency departments are loud, busy and predominantly designed for physical health emergencies.

Over decades, the number of mental health and drug or alcohol presentations at emergency departments has steadily increased.

While we have expanded alternatives for low acuity mental health crises, such as Medicare Mental Health Centres and co-responder models, for serious conditions the emergency department is often still the only option.

Upon arrival, these complex and disruptive behaviours can unsettle the entire emergency department, creating an environment that feels unpredictable, unsafe and crowded with security personnel.

**That's why a Malinauskas Labor Government will take to the election our plan to build the first ever South Australian specialised Mental Health Assessment Units next to the emergency departments at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, Lyell McEwin Hospital and Noarlunga Hospital to help people experiencing a mental health crisis or drug or alcohol related issue.**

Our plan will direct complex patients into a new, well-resourced and low-stimulus environment - providing better care to people experiencing a mental health crisis.

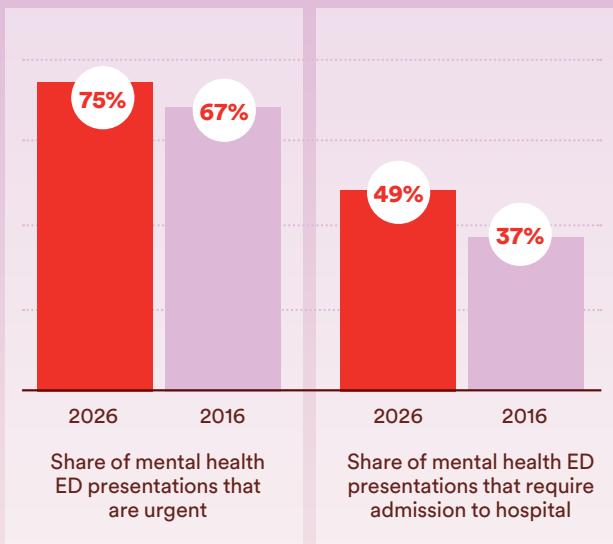
It will also reduce disruption for patients and frontline health staff in our emergency departments, through fewer Code Black security callouts.

The model of care will be developed in conjunction with both emergency department and mental health clinicians – experts in managing a patient in crisis - to deliver a jointly staffed model. We will also consult the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) and the Australasian College of Emergency Medicine as part of this process.

We will first build a new unit at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and once the model is established and operating well, we will replicate it at the Lyell McEwin and Noarlunga Hospitals, ensuring new facilities for the northern, central and southern Adelaide communities.

**The most common reason people present to EDs for mental health care in SA is due to co-morbid drug or alcohol use.**

AIHW data



**People are more critically unwell when presenting to an ED for mental health care – 75% are triaged as urgent or higher, up from 67% 10 years ago.**

**49% of ED patients are now required to be admitted to a bed, up from 37% 10 years ago.**

AIHW data



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