



## MEDIA RELEASE – 27 November 2024

### Free mental health support, without appointment or referral

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Today the Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Emma McBride and Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Ged Kearney visited the new Canberra Medicare Mental Health Centre, in the city centre.

The centre is one of the first Medicare Mental Health Centres to be operational in Australia, leading a network of 61 Medicare Mental Health Centres across the country by mid-2026. The second Medicare Mental Health Centre in the ACT will be opened in Tuggeranong in 2025.

Capital Health Network (CHN) CEO Stacy Leavens said the Canberra Medicare Mental Health Centre provides free and accessible mental health services to adults in the Canberra community, without an appointment or referral.

“The Canberra Medicare Mental Health Centre will continue to deliver on the successes of the Canberra Head to Health Centre which opened in October 2021. Mental health services provided by the centre will remain free, plus clients don’t need to have an appointment, referral or Medicare card to attend,” said Ms Leavens, CHN CEO.

Think Mental Health’s Clinical Director and Clinical Psychologist, Vanessa Hamilton said the centre will continue to guide Canberrans to access the right local mental health information, services and support.

“Since Head to Health opened 3 years ago, our multidisciplinary team of Psychologists, Mental Health Workers and Social Workers have supported over 2700 people connect to the right services to meet their needs. We will continue to offer this support in-person, online or over the phone at the Canberra Medicare Mental Health Centre,” said Ms Hamilton.

CHN, ACT’s Primary Health Network (PHN), has commissioned Think Mental Health to deliver the Canberra Medicare Mental Health Centre and the Tuggeranong Medicare Mental Health Centre. The centre is supported by funding from the ACT PHN through the Australian Government’s PHN Program

The Canberra Medicare Mental Health Centre is at 14 Childers St, Canberra City. The centres provide free, immediate, short and medium-term care to any adult. No appointment or referral required. For more information phone 02 5117 4357.

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