Federal Budget invests in key areas of Mental Health

3 April 2019 – Butterfly Foundation welcomes key investments in mental health announced by the Federal Health Minister, Greg Hunt, in the 2019-20 Federal Budget.

Butterfly CEO, Kevin Barrow, commented “The Australian Government has committed to new investments in mental health for Australians who need intensive and specialist mental health care. Hundreds of millions of dollars in new funding has been allocated for innovative programs to deliver tailored, intensive and individual mental health treatment.”

“The significant investment into improved access to treatment for eating disorders across Australia is groundbreaking. Butterfly will work with the Government and sector organisations to roll out six new residential treatment centres around the country. Each centre will provide a new model of wrap-around intensive multi-disciplinary treatment, delivered in community and not in a hospital setting.

“We are pleased to see key new mental health programs announced to support Australians in their workplaces and parents from pregnancy with a new perinatal program, through to walking alongside young adults as they tackle the challenges of life in the expanded Headspace support.

“Two other key new investments will focus on the mental ill health experiences of our first nations people, and will trial the delivery of intensive services for adults who need treatment for mental illness in our community any time of day or night with another in-community service,” said Mr Barrow.

Butterfly Foundation is committed to end-to-end health system reform which delivers across all levels of the health system, and to ensure that evidence-based information continues to be made available and delivered through the National Eating Disorders Collaboration (NEDC).

“We look forward to playing a key role in identifying and delivering reforms for eating disorders which have connected referral pathways, supported by a well-trained and enhanced workforce,” he said.

Butterfly also welcomes the announcement of the National Suicide Information Initiative to be led by the National Mental Health Commission in partnership with The Australia Institute of Health and Welfare.

“Eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness, with suicide one of the leading causes of premature death in people with eating disorders. Having real-time data that reflects Australia’s understanding and experience of suicide across all communities is crucial to how we design and action our suicide prevention and intervention programs.

“We acknowledge the serious challenges ahead to solve key areas of mental health services that need an innovative approach,” said Mr Barrow.
“While treatment and support are required for more Australians seeking help across all experiences of mental illness, we will also prioritise the need for investment in prevention and early intervention for eating disorders, and tackling the root causes of these potentially life-threatening illnesses,” said Mr Barrow.

Butterfly will work closely with partners and colleagues across mental health, medical and allied health organisations to strengthen our health system, and to ensure a better experience for Australians and their carers living with eating disorders.

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NOTE TO ALL EDITORS AND PRODUCERS – Please refer to the Mindframe National Guidelines for Safe Reporting and include the below help seeking advice in all media coverage.

Anyone needing support with eating disorders or body image issues is encouraged to contact Butterfly Foundation National Helpline 1800 ED HOPE on 1800 33 4673 or support@thebutterflyfoundation.org.au
For urgent support call Lifeline 13 11 14

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