



Senator the Hon. Anne Ruston
Minister for Families and Social Services
Manager of Government Business in the Senate

MEDIA RELEASE

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Breaking down barriers into the workforce for people with a disability and mental illness

The Morrison Government is investing in innovative strategies to address the barriers preventing people with mental illness and disability from finding and keeping a job.

Minister for Families and Social Services Anne Ruston said the Government has committed an additional \$45.7 million to extend two programs dedicated to helping young people with mental illness join the workforce.

The funding will be used to double the number of headspace sites running the evidence-based Individual Placement and Support Program (IPS) to 50 and to support headspace National to continue the Digital Work and Study Service.

Work is also underway on developing a new National Disability Employment Strategy which will consider a diverse range of barriers to work for people with physical, neurological and intellectual disability as well as mental health issues.

2016 Australian Paralympian of the year Dylan Alcott OAM and Chancellor of Monash University Simon McKeon AO have been appointed as the joint chairs of the new Disability Employment Advisory Committee to help develop the strategy.

“When I speak to employers they all say they understand the benefits of employing people with disability or mental illness but when it comes down to making decisions about who to employ the data shows these positive attitudes are not translating into outcomes,” Minister Ruston said.

“We must ensure we continue to work toward our goal for an inclusive Australian society that enables all Australians to gain and maintain employment.”

The expansion of the IPS program will allow more than 6000 young people under the age of 25 experiencing mental illness to receive specialist vocational and employment support in tandem with clinical treatment to find and keep a job over the next four years.

“Almost 3000 young people participated in a trial across both programs with around 40 per cent of participants successfully finding a job as a result,” Minister Ruston said.

“This program has never been more important given this year we have seen young people disproportionately affected by COVID-19 in terms of jobs losses which we know can compound the mental health impact so many are feeling as a result of the pandemic.”

The Disability Employment Advisory Committee will ensure the Government leverages from a broad range of expertise including people with a disability to improve employment outcomes.

Co-chair Dylan Alcott OAM said it was an honour to be a part of the Advisory Committee so people with disability could find meaningful employment and live the lives they deserve to live.

“We have assembled a great group of people with diverse experiences and thoughts and we plan to develop real, tangible outcomes that change perceptions and create opportunities for the millions of people with disability across Australia,” he said.

Professor Patrick McGorry, executive director of Orygen which runs the IPS program with headspace and Advisory Committee member, welcomed the Government’s commitment to making a real lasting difference in the lives of people who face barriers to work.

“The onset of mental illness often occurs in young people which, by the age of 25, can significantly affect their ability to transition from study to work,” Professor McGorry said.

“IPS has demonstrated that providing career assistance hand-in-hand with clinical support can make a profound difference in the lives of young Australians and ensure they can reach their full potential.

“I am also pleased to be a member of the Government’s Advisory Committee which will help map out a long-term strategy to better support people with disability into the workforce.”

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IPS SITES

State	New IPS Locations	Existing IPS Locations
Victoria	Werribee	Bendigo
	Geelong	Shepparton
	Dandenong	Frankston
	Melton	Sunshine
	Knox	
	Ballarat	
	Warrnambool	
Queensland	Rockhampton	Inala
	Mackay	Meadowbrook
	Ipswich	Mount Isa
	Caboolture	Hervey Bay
		Cairns
		Townsville
New South Wales	Newcastle	Dubbo
	Bankstown	Gosford
	Ashfield	Penrith
	Wollongong	Nowra
	Wagga Wagga	Bega
	Tamworth	Grafton
Western Australia	Joondalup	Albany
	Bunbury	Broome
	Geraldton	Midland
	Kalgoorlie	
South Australia	Onkaparinga	Edinburgh North
	Whyalla	Port Augusta
	Mount Barker	
Northern Territory	Alice Springs	Darwin
Australian Capital Territory	Tuggeranong	
Tasmania		Hobart
		Devonport

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Committee Joint Chairs

Dylan Alcott OAM - Founder, Dylan Alcott Foundation and Get Skilled Access

Simon McKeon AO - Chancellor of Monash University, Founder of MS Research Australia

Committee Members

Dr. Ben Gauntlett – Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission

Carolyn Frohmader – Executive Director, Women With Disabilities Australia

Dani Fraillon – Chief Operating Officer, Get Skilled Access

Donna Bain – General Manager, Self Help Workplace

Garry Terrill – Chief Operating Officer, Australian Retailers Association and Director, Retail Institute

Ian Tsolakis - Group Disability Employment Manager, Crown Resorts

Innes Willox - Chief Executive, Australian Industry Group

Jody Barney - Owner/Manager, Deaf Indigenous Community Consultancy

Kerrie Brewer - General Manager, Foundation and Community, Hawthorn Football Club

Kerry McQuillan - State Director (QLD) and National Lead (Diversity and Inclusion), Randstad

Rachel Mead – Head of Diversity and Inclusion, Woolworths Group

Sally Sinclair – Chief Executive Officer, National Employment Services Association

Teresa Pilbeam - National Coordinator, Early Days and Indigenous Liaison Programs, Autism Queensland Limited

Thérèse Campbell – Chairperson, Disability Employment Australia

Professor Patrick McGorry AO – Executive Director, Orygen and Founding Director, National Youth Mental Health Foundation (headspace)