

MEDIA RELEASE

No time to waste: Reducing Australia's mental health support wait times

- One in five Australian adults, and one in seven young Australians experienced a mental health disorder in the last year
- Data reveals there's an average three month wait time to see a psychologist and six months for a psychiatrist
- Someone.health, Australia's largest online psychology clinic, is dedicated to ensuring timely care is within reach of all Australians

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – In the wake of the ongoing mental health crisis, Australia is experiencing an unprecedented demand for mental health support, exacerbated by the lingering effects of the pandemic. Research shows one in five Australian adults, and one in seven young Australians experienced a mental health disorder in the previous 12 months¹.

The proportion of Australians who needed to see a health professional for their mental health increased to 18.5% in 2021-22, from 17.3% in 2020-21². With such a high demand for care, long wait times have become a significant barrier to accessing timely mental health services.

The concerning wait times to see a specialist face-to-face in Australia continues to grow with data revealing there's an average three month wait time to see a psychologist and six months for psychiatrists³.

Michelle Olaithe, Clinical Psychologist at Someone.health, Australia's biggest online psychology clinic, says long wait times for mental health support can be linked to greater symptom severity and deterioration in mental health⁴.

Additionally, when faced with such a barrier, clients often leave a service to try and find care elsewhere. In fact, research by Someone.health saw GP referrals to their service increase by over half (56%) from January to August, 2023.

"Thousands of Australians with a mental health disorder are not getting the professional help they need. It's crucial for individuals experiencing mental health issues to access support quickly and efficiently," says Michelle.

"Telehealth mental health treatment allows us to bridge the gap geographically and financially, offering services during the time they would be otherwise waiting for face-to-face services."

Over the past year, telehealth services have made significant strides in keeping up with the demand and reducing wait times. In fact, almost one third (30%) of Australians had a telehealth consultation in the last 12 months².

With over 200 psychologists in the online network, Someone.health provides extensive choices and strives for “zero” wait times for “next available” appointments. The introduction of this telehealth service has further enhanced flexibility, enabling both clients and clinicians to access immediate support.

“We’re working hard towards a goal of providing immediate access to help when it is needed. On our platform, appointments are available seven days a week, at any time of the day, to cater to the diverse needs of our clients,” says Someone.health CEO, Andy Laws.

“Our commitment to reducing wait time extends beyond numbers, it’s about the right care for those in need, when they need it. Since the pandemic, online therapy has remained highly in demand compared to traditional therapy, with research showing it is as effective as in-person options. The average wait time at Someone.health from first contact by a client to see a psychologist is steady at one to two weeks, versus three months,” says Andy.

In a post-pandemic world, the demand for mental health support has never been more urgent. At Someone.health, the organisation stands at the forefront of this battle to meet the demand and ensure timely care is within the reach of all Australians. For more information visit: [Someone.health](https://someone.health).

About Someone.health

Someone.health is a Medicare bulk-billed, affordable, and convenient online psychology clinic offering appointments Australia-wide. With over 200 registered psychologists and general practitioners (GPs), mental health care is available online via video conferencing or phone seven days a week. Someone.health is part of the [HealthBright](#) family of brands whose goal is to provide quality, accessible, affordable mental health support to everyone who needs it through outstanding digital care.

About the Research & Citations

1. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/mental-health>
2. <https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/more-people-waiting-longer-see-gp-urgent-medical-care>
3. <https://health-bright.com.au/>
4. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6221005/>