

6 December 2021

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Survey shows 47% of psychologists can't accept new clients

Many psychologists in private practice are unable to accept new clients, while existing clients are showing more distress and anxiety compared with 2020.

A recent [survey](#) of more than 600 psychologists in private practice conducted by the **Australian Association of Psychologists** (AAPi) revealed that 47% were unable to accept new clients - an increase of 10% on last year; with 78% reporting their clients exhibited more distress, anxiety, or depression in 2021.

Conducted in November, the survey also showed the following:

- 41.87% reported working more hours than last year
- 78% of psychologists would be able to bulk bill if the rebate was raised to \$150
- 76.8% of respondents indicated there has been an increase in the need for their services in 2021, compared to 2020. This increase is on top of the previous increase of about the same from 2019-2020
- 60.1% of respondents said their clients required more sessions than in 2020
- 29% have a wait time of more than eight weeks for new clients
- 37% of psychologists felt their own mental health was a "little worse" compared with last year and 50% are dissatisfied with their remuneration
- almost 95% of psychologists want telehealth to remain permanent (this is due to [expire](#) December 2021).

AAPi Executive Director Tegan Carrison said the survey results were not at all surprising.

"This survey simply confirms for us with real data what we already believed: that the demands on the mental health system are unprecedented and overwhelming," she said.

"As the Federal Government's recent committee report on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention indicated, significant reforms across all mental health services are needed to improve the wellbeing of both the patients and the professionals with the challenge of caring for them."

Ms Carrison said psychologists love their profession and deserved to be better recognised for the valuable expertise they provide to our community.

"The survey also indicated frustration with low level rebates under Medicare as well as the two-tier rebate system for psychologists," she said.

Under Medicare, clients of registered psychologists are rebated \$88 for a 50-minute session, while clients of clinical psychologists are rebated at \$129 for the same kind of service. The majority of those surveyed were registered psychologists.

Click [here](#) for the full survey results.

**Tegan Carrison is the Executive Director of the Australian Association of Psychologists Inc (AAPi),** a not-for-profit peak body for all psychologists in Australia.

**About Australian Association of Psychologists Inc (AAPi)**

The AAPi is a not-for-profit peak body for psychologists that aims to preserve the rich diversity of psychological practice in Australia. Formed in 2010 by a group of passionate grassroots psychologists, the AAPi's primary goal is to address inequality in the profession and represent all psychologists and their clients equally to government and funding bodies. Its primary mission is to lobby for equitable access for the Australian public to professional psychological services funded under the current Medicare Better Access Scheme.

**About Tegan Carrison, Executive Director, AAPi**

Tegan has spent over 15 years in public health promotion and is passionate about advocating for the rights of health care professionals and improving access for the community. After studying Nutrition and Health Promotion at Deakin University, Tegan went on to become an experienced clinical educator, supervisor, and mentor, including starting a student-led interprofessional clinic with the University of Queensland's not-for-profit UQ Health Care. Tegan also brings a wealth of experience in business management, administration and human resource management. She is passionate and dedicated to improving access to mental health services and creating the leading members association for psychologists in Australia.