

## **Gidget Foundation Australia welcomes \$25 million investment to fund the opening of 20 new Gidget House locations nationally**

- **Gidget Foundation Australia welcomes landmark investment election promise into perinatal mental health services for expectant and new parents**
- **A re-elected Morrison Government has announced \$25 million to establish 20 new perinatal mental health and wellbeing service centres across Australia**
- **The centres will provide crucial free psychological counselling to Australian parents who need extra support**

**EMBARGO: 8th May, 9am.** Gidget Foundation Australia (GFA) welcomes the announcement that a re-elected Morrison Government will make a record \$25 million investment in the development of 20 new Gidget House sites over the next four years, with at least one new service to be established in every state and territory. The new services will expand on the existing 23 Gidget Houses currently operating across the country.

Announced today, the Government's investment election promise will go towards meeting the urgent mental health needs of Australia's newest and growing families. In 2021, Gidget Foundation Australia delivered 127% more perinatal mental health consultations than in 2020.

In fact, as of November 2021, there was a 24-week waitlist across Gidget House services, demonstrating a strong need for further investment in this area.

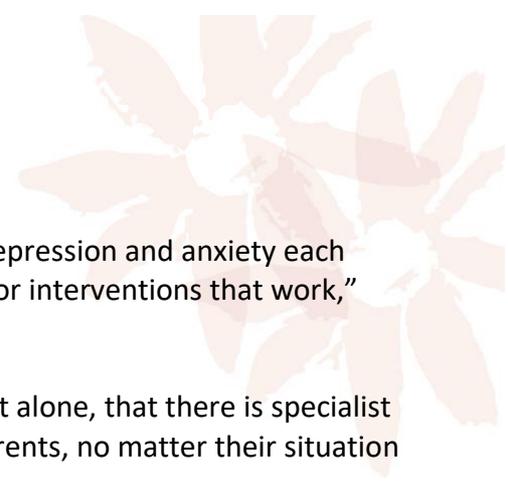
**Gidget Foundation Australia CEO, Arabella Gibson** said of this announcement, "We're thrilled on behalf of families across Australia as demand for services has been evident for some time now. This investment will be instrumental to us being able to drive forward in making our perinatal mental health services even more accessible to expectant and new parents seeking support.

"We currently have an average 14-week waitlist nationally requiring workforce development to expand our referral pathways to provide the necessary support for those diagnosed. COVID-19 impacted this significantly, creating a lag and reducing the number of consultations.

"With this funding we are able to facilitate support for the growing number of those diagnosed and provide much-needed treatment and psychological counselling for mental health in families," Ms. Gibson said.

The new Gidget Houses will be opened over the next four years and will be located across Australia, including regional locations. They will support the emotional wellbeing of expectant and new parents to ensure they receive timely and appropriate specialist care, offering up to 20 free psychological sessions for expectant and new parents. Having launched an innovative workforce development program almost 12 months ago, Gidget Foundation Australia will introduce the program to this model of care to train more clinicians to deliver specialist support to perinatal clients in these centres.

**Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention David Coleman** said a re-elected Morrison Government would deliver 20 new Gidget Foundation Australia perinatal mental health and wellbeing services across the country through a \$25 million investment over four years.



“We know around 100,000 Australian parents are touched by perinatal depression and anxiety each year and the Gidget Foundation Australia have the experience and skills for interventions that work,” Assistant Minister Coleman said.

“We want to make sure that all new parents know they don’t have to go it alone, that there is specialist support available and that it can be accessed by all new and expecting parents, no matter their situation or where they live.

“Gidget Foundation Australia has a long track record of supporting thousands of women and families each year and these additional locations will mean trusted support is available to more Australians, right across the country.

“Our Government is committed to the task of ensuring every Australian gets the help they need to overcome mental ill health and that means ensuring high-quality support is available to those who need it,” he said.

Gidget Foundation Australia currently has 211 people on waitlists across its’ 23 Gidget House sites nationally, with an average wait time of 14 weeks. This investment will allow the charity to reach and support even more people impacted by perinatal depression and anxiety. Gidget Foundation Australia exists to support the emotional wellbeing of families across Australia.

## **ENDS**

### **About Gidget Foundation Australia**

Gidget Foundation Australia (GFA) is a not-for-profit organisation that exists to support the emotional wellbeing of expectant and new parents, to ensure they receive timely, appropriate and specialist care. Gidget Foundation Australia provides a range of clinical treatment programs. These include individual psychological consultations (with no out-of-pocket expenses) via face to face or telehealth, group treatment and early intervention screening.

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