



## **The Hon Darren Chester MP**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Minister for Defence Personnel

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

Friday, 26 June 2020

### **FUNDING BOOST FOR VETERAN CARE**

Veterans' health and financial wellbeing has been given a boost with the Government announcing an additional \$17.3 million to support two pilot programs for a further 12 months and increased claims processing capacity at the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said the Government is committed to putting veterans and their families first, and this additional funding will continue to support their health needs.

"The Government is investing a further \$2.8 million into our Provisional Access to Medical Treatment (PAMT) pilot program, which delivers medical treatment to veterans for one or more of the top 20 most commonly accepted conditions while their initial liability claim is being considered," Mr Chester said.

"This program provides early access to treatment before a claim has been approved, which aids earlier recovery and delivers ongoing wellbeing outcomes for the veteran.

"To-date, this program has benefited more than 14,000 veterans by providing early medical treatment while they wait for the outcome of their claim, with more than 75 per cent of veterans ultimately having their claims accepted.

"Importantly, those veterans who do not have their claims accepted are not required to repay any of the costs associated with the treatment they have received.

"By extending this program for a further 12 months it will continue to support veterans to achieve better health outcomes."

Following the success of a pilot case management program supporting highly vulnerable veterans, the Government is also providing an additional \$2.8 million to extend the Wellbeing and Support Program for a further 12 months.

"The program provides intensive and supportive face-to-face case management services for highly vulnerable veterans who are either transitioning into civilian life after their ADF service, or who have complex care needs," Mr Chester said.

The extension of these two pilot programs — PAMT and the Wellbeing and Support Program — will allow time to fully evaluate the benefits of these programs and provide recommendations on how to further improve services and support for veterans and their families.

*Open Arms — Veterans & Families Counselling provides free and confidential support for current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families. Help is available 24/7 on 1800 011 046 (international: +61 1800 011 046 or +61 8 8241 4546) or visit [www.OpenArms.gov.au](http://www.OpenArms.gov.au)*

“The Government is also providing an additional \$11.6 million for claims processing to ensure veterans and their families continue to be able to access a range of compensation, income support, and other entitlements at this critical time during the pandemic.

“DVA has been investing over many years to simplify and improve the compensation claims process, which has seen an overall increase in the claims received of around 80 per cent across all claim types in 2018-19 compared to the previous financial year.

“This funding is vital to ensure we can process claims in an appropriate timeframe for our veterans and their families.”

Australia’s veteran community ranges from our Second World War veterans and war widows through to contemporary veterans with young families. They have all served our nation and the Government is committed to ensuring their needs are met.

**ENDS**

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**  
**Rachel Tharratt: 02 6277 7820**  
**DVA Media: 02 6289 6466**

**Office of the Hon. Darren Chester, Canberra ACT.**