

World-first free eClinic offering evidence-based eating disorder treatment to Australians, and supporting clinicians

CANBERRA, Thursday, July 24, 2025 – In a landmark move set to transform eating disorder treatment in Australia, MPs, clinicians, celebrities, patients and carers will gather at Parliament House today, to launch the world's-first, free, national eClinic dedicated to these complex illnesses.

Developed by Australia's leading authority on eating disorder research, the InsideOut Institute, in partnership with the Sydney Local Health District, the new eClinic – eclinic.insideoutinstitute.org.au – offers evidence-based, self-paced programs for Australians living with eating disorders, their carers', and healthcare professionals.

The eClinic systematises the delivery of care for people with eating disorders and enables healthcare professionals to offer evidence-based programs to their patients and monitor their progress.

According to Clinical Psychologist and InsideOut Institute Director, Professor Sarah Maguire OAM, Sydney, eating disorders are complex, serious illnesses with devastating psychological, physical and social impacts, and are on the rise.^{1,2} Despite being treatable,^{4,5} they remain a growing public health concern.³⁻⁵

Yet limited access to training and support for clinicians, specialised services, stigma, shame, and long wait times continue to prevent many people from receiving timely support.^{6,7}

"Early detection and treatment are critical to improving outcomes for people living with eating disorders,"⁸ said Prof Maguire.

"Many people, and their carers' don't know where, when, or how to access help,⁹ and many clinicians do not know how to upskill or where to refer people.

"The InsideOut eClinic was designed by clinicians, researchers and people with lived experience to break down barriers to accessing high-quality, flexible care," Prof Maguire said.

"The eClinic acts as a front door to the health system, delivering free, evidence-based treatment at scale.

"It makes expert support accessible to everyone, especially those living in rural and under-served communities," said Prof Maguire.

Importantly, for health professionals, the e-Clinic standardises evidence-based packages.

"Health professionals no longer need to be an expert in eating disorders to provide the highest quality care. They just need to know where to send their patient," said Prof Maguire.

A dedicated 'Healthcare Professionals Hub' on the eClinic allows health professionals to prescribe programs for their patient, monitor their progress and to communicate securely with them.

There is also a session-by-session training program that takes a health professional through exactly what they need to say, and do to guide a patient through to completion of the various digital therapies. In this way, it provides gradual exposure to high quality treatments for eating disorders and upskills health professionals while also enabling their patients to receive the best evidence available, offering them with life-saving treatment on demand.

Australian author, comedian, and broadcaster, Lucinda Price, aka 'Froomes', Sydney, battled anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder for more than four years, before seeking help in 2020, after enduring severe physical, mental and social tolls. Like many Australians, Lucinda faced long wait times to access the urgent support she needed. Fortunately, one specialist she couldn't see, suggested the InsideOut Institute's Binge Eating eTherapy (BEeT) program – a flexible, self-paced treatment for binge eating and bulimia nervosa. Lucinda became one of its first trial participants," Lucinda said.

"During the 12-week program, my approach to food shifted dramatically. It felt like I was both the subject and the witness, observing changes in my behaviour and thinking patterns.

"When I finished the program, I felt completely different. I was lucky to have found the trial. It played a huge role in rewiring my brain," said Lucinda.

"I used to spend all day, every day, thinking about food. Now, that mental space has been replaced with this feeling that I can't believe how different and happy I feel."

Now seven years into recovery, Lucinda is using her experience for good.

"I'm proud to be an InsideOut eClinic ambassador because it was a pivotal stepping stone in my recovery.

"The more access Australians have to treatment, the better," said Lucinda.

Former AFL star and mental health advocate, Brock McLean, Brisbane, mounted a private battle with bulimia nervosa for more than four years. Now in recovery, Brock is using his platform to challenge stigma, particularly around men's mental health and eating disorders. His disordered eating, which began during his elite sporting career, and continued beyond retirement, was closely linked with co-occurring mental health challenges, including depression and anxiety.

His experience mirrors the struggle many Australians living with an eating disorder face: delayed diagnosis, limited access to care, and a lack of services reflecting the diversity of those affected.

"The biggest challenge was admitting I needed help. But once I did, everything changed," Brock said.

"The eClinic will break down huge barriers – especially cost and access. It will save lives."

Brock is now a proud ambassador for the IOI eClinic and a passionate advocate for inclusive, early intervention approaches to treatment. Living with his wife Stephanie and young daughters in Brisbane, he describes this new chapter of his life as his "happiest and healthiest".

Evidence-based therapies to deliver timely and inclusive care

Currently, only about one in five of people living with an eating disorder receive treatment. Delays in accessing care can stretch to up to 10 years, depending on the type of disorder,^{6,10-12} Clinical Psychologist, InsideOut Postdoctoral Research Associate and eClinic Research and Evaluation lead, Dr Sarah Barakat, Sydney, explained.

Those living with binge eating disorder are often under-recognised by healthcare professionals, while concerning, those with bulimia nervosa rarely receive treatment for their eating disorders at all.⁶

"Delays are fuelled, in part, by outdated assumptions about who develops an eating disorder or who they affect, often reinforced by bias that eating disorders only occur in young, underweight females," said Dr Barakat.

"Digital, on-demand tools like the eClinic have the power to break down barriers and deliver timely, inclusive care to those in need.

"Our research reveals just 10 sessions of our online therapy can be as effective as 20 in-person sessions,¹³ highlighting the potential for digital solutions to close the treatment gap," Dr Barakat said.

InsideOut eClinic supported by the eating disorders community

According to Executive Director, Eating Disorders Families Australia, Jane Rowan, Brisbane, an eating disorder is not a choice. It is a serious and complex mental illness¹⁴ that can affect anyone,¹⁵ and potentially lead to permanent physical complications.¹⁵

"An eating disorder can pervade nearly every aspect of a person's life,¹⁶ and cause significant distress for their family, carers, partners, and friends.¹⁷

"Eating disorders are on the rise in Australia, with disordered eating increasing by 21 per cent over the past 11 years.¹ Yet despite this rise, few people seek treatment, highlighting an urgent, unmet need for early intervention and improved access to care," said Ms Rowan.

"The eating disorders community wholeheartedly supports the official launch of the IOI eClinic. We welcome the enhanced access to care, and the transformative treatment outcomes this platform promises to deliver."

About the eClinic launch

Those officiating at the IOI eClinic launch at Parliament House, Canberra, this morning include:

- Clinical Psychologist and Director of the IOI, Prof Sarah Maguire OAM, Sydney;
- Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, The Hon. Emma McBride MP, Central Coast NSW;
- Former AFL player, mental health advocate and coach, and IOI eClinic Ambassador, Brock Mclean, Brisbane;
- Author, comedian, broadcaster and internet personality who overcame binge eating disorder through the IOI's eClinic, Lucinda Price, Sydney;
- Executive Director, Eating Disorders Families Australia, Jane Rowan, Brisbane.

Additional attendees include Independent Senator for the ACT, and former professional rugby union player, David Pocock, Canberra; clinicians, other stakeholders patients and carers.

About the eClinic

The InsideOut Institute's eClinic is Australia's first free, fully online, national treatment hub for eating disorders. It offers flexible, self-paced programs, including BEeT for binge eating and bulimia nervosa, Skilled for a wider range of eating disorder symptoms, Supported for carers, and a Healthcare Professionals (HCP) Hub. By removing traditional barriers to care, the eClinic ensures people living with eating disorders can access vital support when they need it most, regardless of their postcode, socio-economic status, or cultural background.

To access the IOI eClinic, and learn more, head to eclinic.insideoutinstitute.org.au.

If you suspect you, or a loved one, may be living with an eating disorder, speak to your local healthcare practitioner without delay, or head to insideoutinstitute.org.au to complete an online screener and assessment, and to access more information and professional support.

Australian professional patient support services offering 24/7 helpline services include:

- Butterfly National Helpline: 1800 334 673
- Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636
- LifeLine: 13 11 14
- Men's Line Australia: 1300 78 99 78
- Kids Help Line: 1800 55 1800

ends#

DOWNLOADABLE ASSETS

DIGITAL MEDIA KIT	A full digital media kit will be available for download Wednesday, July 23 under embargo – eclinicmediakit.org
VIDEO NEWS RELEASE	Available for download on digital media kit on Wednesday, July 23
AUDIO NEWS GRABS	Available for download on digital media kit on Wednesday, July 23
MEDIA CONTACTS + INTERVIEWS	Kirsten Bruce or Mel Kheradi, VIVA! Communications M 0401 717 566 0421 551 257 T 02 9968 3741 E kirstenbruce@vivacommunications.com.au mel@vivacommunications.com.au

We encourage reporting about lived experience of an eating disorder, but please be mindful of how it is portrayed.

Be careful **not** to:

- Mention specific weights, measurements, weight loss, quantities;
- Detail specific behaviours;
- Post images of people with extreme body weights or before/after pictures;
- Glamourise eating disorders;
- Use the terms "sufferer", "patient", "anorexic" or "bulimic" to describe someone with an eating disorder. Instead use "person [living] with an eating disorder".

More information about reporting and portrayal of eating disorders here:

<https://mindframemedia.imgix.net/assets/src/uploads/Reporting-and-portrayal-of-eating-disorders-Digital.pdf>

AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

EXPERTS	
Professor Sarah Maguire OAM	Clinical Psychologist & Director, InsideOut Institute, SYDNEY [VISITING CANBERRA]
Dr Sarah Barakat	Clinical Psychologist & Postdoctoral Research Associate, InsideOut Institute, SYDNEY [VISITING CANBERRA]
Sarah Horsefield	Clinical Psychologist & Co-Director, InsideOut Institute eClinic, SYDNEY [VISITING CANBERRA]
Rachel Denzel	eClinic service manager, SYDNEY
Dr Deanna Bowen	Local Eating Disorder Coordinator, Northern NSW Local Health District, NORTHERN NSW [VISITING SYDNEY]
Sarah Pollitt	Accredited Mental Health Social Worker, Clinical Family Therapist & Senior Manager, Eating Disorders Victoria, MELBOURNE
Dr Tania Withington	Social worker & family therapist, North Brisbane Psychology, Northside Child & Youth Psychiatry, BRISBANE
Poppy Batts	Clinical Lead, Eating Disorders Queensland, BRISBANE
Anita Reimann	Psychologist & General Manager, Tasmanian Eating Disorder Service, LAUNCESTON
Dr Anna Seth	Specialist General Practitioner Therapist, The Bubble Hobart, HOBART
Phoebe Ho	Clinical Psychologist, Lived Experience Advocate, & InsideOut Institute e-Clinic Lived Experience Advisory Group Member, PERTH
Dr Amy Burton	Clinical psychologist & credentialled eating disorder clinician, SYDNEY & DARWIN
Tiegan Holtham	Clinical psychologist, The Flourish Collective & Headspace, DARWIN
PATIENT ADVOCACY GROUP REPRESENTATIVE	
Jane Rowan	Executive Director, Eating Disorders Families Australia & lived experience eating disorder carer, BRISBANE [VISITING CANBERRA]
HIGH-PROFILE AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADORS	
Lucinda Price aka 'Froomes'	Author, comedian, broadcaster & InsideOut eClinic ambassador who overcame binge eating disorder using the InsideOut eClinic, SYDNEY [VISITING CANBERRA]
Brock McLean	Former AFL player, mental health advocate & coach, & InsideOut eClinic ambassador who wrestled with bulimia nervosa for 4+ years, BRISBANE [VISITING CANBERRA]

References

1. Deloitte AE. Paying the Price, Second Edition: The economic and social impact of eating disorders in Australia. Report commissioned by The Butterfly Foundation. 2024.
2. New Report Reveals Alarming Growth in Both Prevalence and Cost of Eating Disorders: Butterfly Foundation; 2024 [Available from: <https://butterfly.org.au/news/new-report-reveals-alarming-growth-in-both-prevalence-and-cost-of-eating-disorders/#:~:text=Butterfly%20Foundation%2C%20the%20national%20charity,economic%20cost%20since%202012%20%C2%B9>].
3. Galmiche M, Déchelotte P, Lambert G, Tavalacci MP. Prevalence of eating disorders over the 2000-2018 period: a systematic literature review. Am J Clin Nutr. 2019;109(5):1402-13.
4. Eating Disorders in Australia 2025 [Available from: [https://nedc.com.au/eating-disorders/eating-disorders-explained/eating-disorders-in-australia#:~:text=Eating%20disorder%20symptoms%20are%20on,%2C%20decreased%20quality%20of%20life\).](https://nedc.com.au/eating-disorders/eating-disorders-explained/eating-disorders-in-australia#:~:text=Eating%20disorder%20symptoms%20are%20on,%2C%20decreased%20quality%20of%20life).)].
5. Hay P, Aouad P, Le A, Marks P, Maloney D, Barakat S, et al. Epidemiology of eating disorders: population, prevalence, disease burden and quality of life informing public policy in Australia—a rapid review. Journal of Eating Disorders. 2023;11(1):23.
6. Hamilton A, Mitchison D, Basten C, Byrne S, Goldstein M, Hay P, et al. Understanding treatment delay: Perceived barriers preventing treatment-seeking for eating disorders. Aust N Z J Psychiatry. 2022;56(3):248-59.
7. Linardon J, Jarman HK, Liu C, Anderson C, McClure Z, Messer M. Mental Health Impacts of Self-Help Interventions for the Treatment and Prevention of Eating Disorders. A Meta-Analysis. Int J Eat Disord. 2025;58(5):815-31.
8. Maguire S, Li A, Cunich M, Maloney D. Evaluating the effectiveness of an evidence-based online training program for health professionals in eating disorders. Journal of Eating Disorders. 2019;7(1):14.

9. Barriers to Care: National Eating Disorders Collaboration; [Available from: <https://nedc.com.au/eating-disorders/treatment-and-recovery/barriers-to-care#:~:text=The%20number%20of%20people%20with,disorder%20%5B4%2C%205%5D.>].
10. Hart LM, Granillo MT, Jorm AF, Paxton SJ. Unmet need for treatment in the eating disorders: a systematic review of eating disorder specific treatment seeking among community cases. Clin Psychol Rev. 2011;31(5):727-35.
11. Vanheusden K, Mulder CL, van der Ende J, van Lenthe FJ, Mackenbach JP, Verhulst FC. Young adults face major barriers to seeking help from mental health services. Patient Educ Couns. 2008;73(1):97-104.
12. Cachelin FM, Striegel-Moore RH. Help seeking and barriers to treatment in a community sample of Mexican American and European American women with eating disorders. Int J Eat Disord. 2006;39(2):154-61.
13. Our Research: InsideOut Institute; [Available from: <https://eclinic.insideoutinstitute.org.au/our-research>].
14. Ivancic L, Maguire S, Miskovic-Wheatley J, Harrison C, Nassar N. Prevalence and management of people with eating disorders presenting to primary care: A national study. Aust N Z J Psychiatry. 2021;55(11):1089-100.
15. National Eating Disorders Collaboration. What is an Eating Disorder? [Website]. 2024 [Available from: <https://nedc.com.au/eating-disorders/eating-disorders-explained/whats-an-eating-disorder>].
16. van Hoeken DH, Hans W. Review of the burden of eating disorders: mortality, disability, costs, quality of life, and family burden. Current Opinion in Psychiatry. 2020.
17. InsideOut Institute for Eating Disorders. Managing Distress in Individuals with Eating Disorders 2024 [Available from: <https://insideoutinstitute.org.au/assets/managing-distress-in-individuals-with-eating-disorders.pdf>].