



MOVEMBER® INSTITUTE  
OF MEN'S HEALTH

# Australian Election Platform 2025



# Stop men dying too young

By investing in men's health, we can have a profoundly positive impact across society.



Healthier Men.  
Healthier Relationships.  
Healthier Families.  
Healthier Communities.

## OUR CALL TO ACTION

Movember is calling on all parties and candidates contesting the 2025 Australian Federal Election to commit to urgent and substantial investment in men's health in their election platforms – to stop men dying too young and support healthier men, healthier relationships, healthier families and healthier communities.

As an initial investment, Movember will provide \$10 million and is asking for a commitment of \$60 million AUD in order to shift the dial on men's health. This landmark commitment of a combined \$70 million is required to effectively operationalise the National Men's Health Strategy 2020-2030.

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1. CULTIVATING GRASSROOTS, COMMUNITY-LED PROGRAMS TO TARGET AND TACKLE POOR MEN'S HEALTH OUTCOMES
  2. DEVELOPING A HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE THAT CAN BETTER REACH, RESPOND TO AND CONNECT WITH MEN
  3. FAST-TRACKING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE INTO SOLUTIONS
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## THE STATE OF MEN'S HEALTH

Far too many Australian men are dying young. Two in five (37%) men living in Australia die prematurely, before they are 75 years old. In 2023, 36,000 Australian men and boys died prematurely.

Their deaths – including unacceptable rates of suicide – are overwhelmingly preventable.

Suicide is the leading cause of death in men aged between 15 and 54 in Australia, with more than 2,400 deaths by suicide in 2023.<sup>1</sup>

Over two-thirds of men report facing challenges when engaging with health care, leaving them unsupported, with many disengaging from the healthcare system entirely.<sup>2</sup> Each of these preventable deaths have devastating ripple effects on families, friends and communities.

**Additional investment in the National Men's Health Strategy 2020-2030 of \$70 million AUD is urgently needed to shift the dial on men's health and stop men dying too young.**

The headline statistics above and the concerning detail revealed within Movember's Real Face of Men's Health Report, makes clear the urgent need for system reform and adequate investment in men's health. To effectively solve these problems, Australia needs a healthcare system that can respond to men in all their diversities and needs.

The following calls to action are informed by the findings of the Real Face of Men's Health Report and from Movember's 21 years of experience in men's health and advocacy. What is clear from our research is that by adopting the policy approaches below and properly investing in men's health, it will not only improve the lives of Australian boys and men, the benefits will ripple through their relationships, families, and communities.



# 2/5

men die prematurely,  
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75 years old.

<sup>1</sup>Premature deaths defined as deaths before the age of 75. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023), [Causes of Death, Australia](#), ABS Website, accessed 24 October 2024; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2024). Custom request for premature mortality data. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2023) [Suicide & self-harm monitoring](#), accessed 1 November 2024.

<sup>2</sup>Movember 2024, [The Real face of Men's Health](#), 2024, Australian Report

## OUR PLEDGE

Movember wants to form a long-term and meaningful partnership with the Australian Government in order to tackle the complex issues in men's health together. In doing so, Movember will be committing our own funding, our sector and community networks and our research and programmatic delivery expertise.

As an initial investment, **Movember will provide \$10 million AUD** of the \$70 million investment required to join with the next Australian Government to make this landmark commitment in the National Men's Health Strategy 2020-2030.

In working together to properly invest in men's health in Australia, it won't just benefit men, it will have a profoundly positive impact across our society. Healthier men means a healthier world.

## PRIORITIES FOR INVESTMENT

The National Men's Health Strategy 2020-2030 has bipartisan support and provides a robust and comprehensive framework for change.

However, Australia has failed to realise substantive improvements in men's health under the strategy as investment has been woefully inadequate.

Movember's call for urgent investment of \$70 million over four years to support the National Men's Health Strategy includes:



**\$53M**

over four years for grassroots community programs that we know work to improve health and wellbeing of boys and men and their communities.



**\$11.5M**

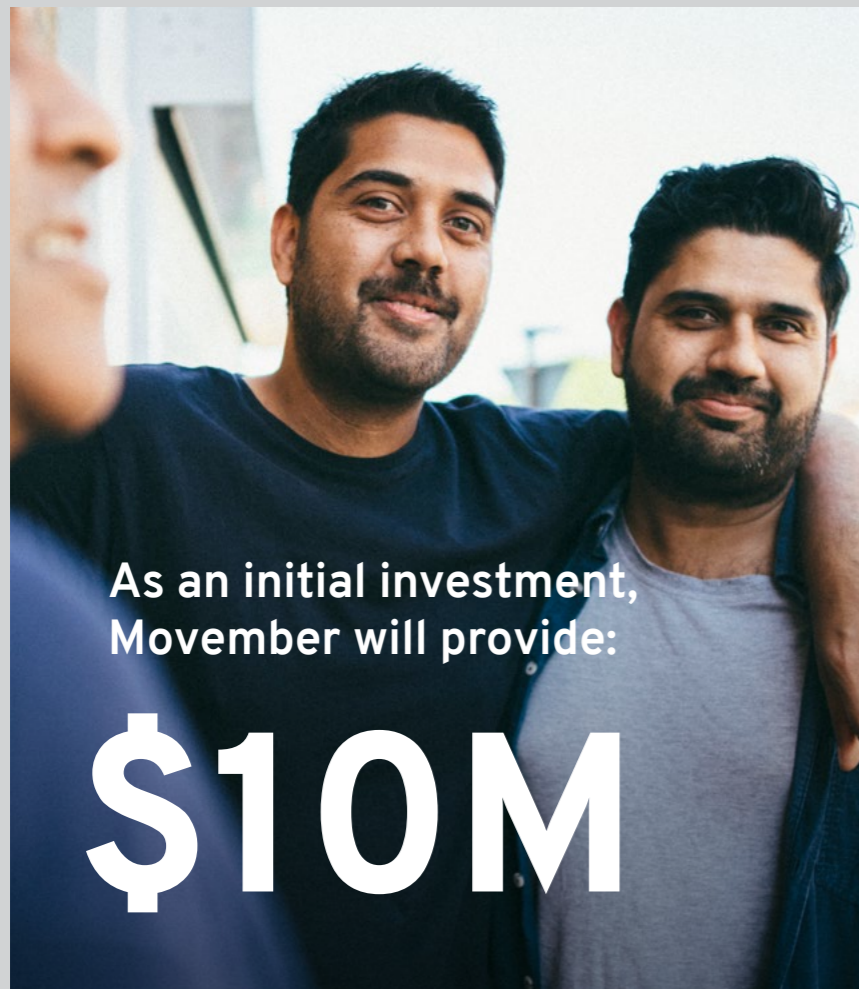
over four years for a national rollout of training for mental health professionals to equip them to more effectively engage and respond to men who access treatment.



**\$5.5M**

over four years to continue to build the knowledge base on the relationship between men's health, masculine norms, and healthy relationships and gender-based violence.

Together, these proposed investments aim to better reach, respond to and retain men in health care – for healthier men, healthier families and healthier communities.



As an initial investment, Movember will provide:

**\$10M**

# 1. Cultivating grassroots, community-led programs to target and tackle poor men's health outcomes

## PRIORITY 1:

\$53 million over four years for grassroots community programs for men's health in 20 communities with high rates of premature death.

Each year, there are men dying too young in every suburb, town and community in Australia.

However, where you live has a shocking impact on how long you live. Men living in Australia's most disadvantaged areas are twice as likely to die prematurely compared with those in the least disadvantaged areas – and this gap is widening.<sup>3</sup>

The following 'heatmaps' show the locational differences in premature mortality rates among men. The areas with the poorest outcomes are disproportionately in regional, rural and remote Australia, where access to healthcare can be limited and there tends to be greater representation of less advantaged demographic groups, including higher populations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. The average rate of male premature death in rural electorates is **3.5 times higher than those in electorates in inner metropolitan areas.**

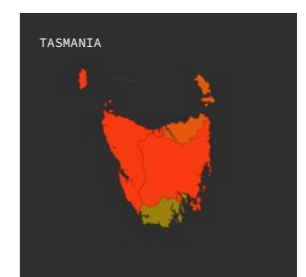
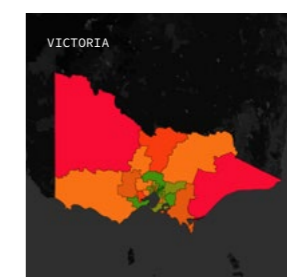
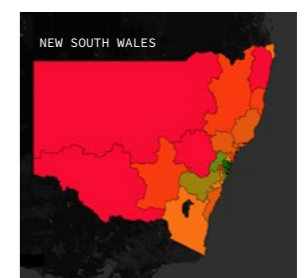
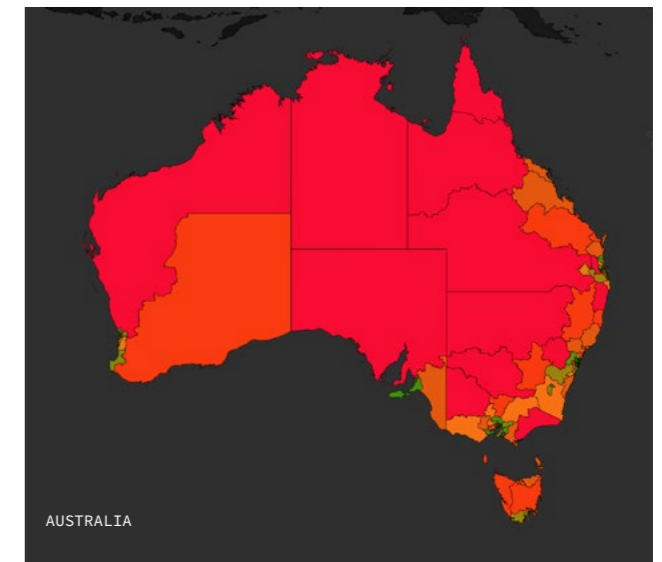
Premature mortality rates among men by electorate are in [The Real Face of Men's Health Report](#).

There is a two-way relationship between locational disadvantage and men's premature mortality.

Social and economic factors are key underlying determinants of the health of men and also contribute to harmful health behaviours and challenges with accessing quality, timely health care. In the other direction, high rates of men's ill-health and premature mortality – including suicide – have widespread ripple effects on families and communities that further compound social and economic disadvantage.<sup>4</sup>

## PREMATURE MORTALITY RATES

FIGURE 1: HEAT MAP OF AGE - STANDARDISED RATE OF MALE PREMATURE MORTALITY BY COMMONWEALTH ELECTORAL DIVISION (ELECTORATES)



<sup>3</sup>The data has been age-standardised to account for differences in the age of the population between constituencies. Age-standardised rates are a weighted average of age-specific mortality rates per 100,000 persons.

<sup>4</sup>Blakely T, Sigglekow F, Irfan M, Mizdrak A, Dieleman J, Bablani L, Clarke P, Wilson N. Disease-related income and economic productivity loss in New Zealand: A longitudinal analysis of linked individual-level data. PLoS Med. 2021 Nov 30;18(11):e1003848. doi: 10.1371/journal.pmed.1003848. PMID: 34847146; PMCID: PMC8631646.

## WHAT IS NEEDED

We need targeted responses to reach and effectively respond to men and boys in community-settings to support health behaviour change and self-management, encourage them to access health care when they need it and to promote social and emotional wellbeing.

Many men aren't equipped or socialised to effectively seek help and the system and cultural barriers faced by men to accessing health care and other supports – for example, rigid adherence to masculine norms, poor health literacy and a health workforce lacking the confidence and competence to respond - are well documented.<sup>5</sup> This leads to delays accessing health care with lasting impacts on their health.

There are a range of low-cost, grassroots community men's health programs that have highly promising or demonstrated effectiveness on the ground in Australian communities. These programs, are well supported by local community groups and participants and provide excellent value for money.

### SOME EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

- Social connection programs such as **Men's Sheds** and other proven peer support programs such as **The Men's Table**, **Mr. Perfect**, **The Fathering Project**, **Grab Life by the Balls**, **Fat Farmers** and **When No One's Watching**.
- Sport-based programs including **Movember's Ahead of the Game** mental health fitness workshops and **Son's of the West** health program involving the **Western Bulldogs Community Foundation**, local councils and community health services.
- Workplace, volunteer and school-based initiatives such as the **Mates in Construction** peer-to-peer suicide prevention program for construction workers, **Disaster Relief Australia** which deploys military veterans, first responders and civilian volunteers to aid disaster recovery operations and in-classroom programs for boys and young men such as **Silence is Deadly**, **Tomorrow Man**, **Top Blokes** and **Man Cave** workshops.
- Targeted culturally appropriate health promotion programs such as **Deadly Choices**, **The Glen** and **Dardi Munwurro**.
- Programs for dads such as **Tuning into Kids**, **Movember's Family Man**, **Daughters and Dads Active and Empowered**, **Healthy Youngsters Healthy Dads**, **Working out Dads** and the **Incredible Years Parenting Program**.



Economic analysis conducted by Movember shows that every \$1 invested in evidence-based grassroots programs for men's health could produce a \$6 return in health benefits, improved quality of life and reduced health system costs.

Communities urgently need greater access to these programs, starting with 20 communities with high rates of premature death among men.

Communities also need access to a greater range of proven solutions to meet their needs. Movember aims to strengthen the evidence of community based programs for men. We will support, with connections and funding, the most promising approaches currently being developed by men's health researchers and organisations to provide these high quality solutions.

Local community representatives and organisations are best placed to determine the priority issues for men and boys within their community based on local knowledge and data. Movember recommends that the funding for grassroots men's health programs be provided to selected communities through the Primary Health Networks, the Aboriginal community-controlled sector and /or through existing place-based structures already established to develop and respond to community-led plans. To inform community-based planning and decision-making with the best evidence, Movember also proposes an evidence guide be developed to offer communities a 'menu' of proven strategies that can be tailored to the local context. This guide would be continually updated as grassroots programs are adapted, trialled and evaluated.

<sup>5</sup> Centre for Social and Early Emotional Development (SEED) (2022). Men's and Boys' Barriers to Health System Access. A Literature Review. Prepared for the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, Canberra.

## FUNDING BREAKDOWN

Total funding of **\$53 million** over four years:

- **\$40 million** over four years for community-level investments - \$2 million per community for 20 communities.
- **\$13 million** for research, evidence and evaluative support across all communities delivered by the Movember Institute for Men's Health.

Funding of \$2 million over four years in a community would support local grassroots organisations to reach hundreds of thousands of local men and boys through new peer support programs, health promotion events and suicide prevention programs.

An investment of \$40 million to communities could provide a return on investment of \$228 million through health and wellbeing improvements for the men involved and their families, and flow on benefits to their employers, communities and the health system.



2.

## Developing a healthcare workforce that can better reach, respond to and connect with men

### PRIORITY 2:

\$11.5 million over four years for a national roll-out of continuing professional development (CPD) training with proven effectiveness for the mental health workforce specifically on engaging and responding to men.

In 2020/21, almost 1 in 4, or 380,300, men who experienced mental health issues in the previous 12 months had an unmet mental health need.<sup>6</sup> As many men delay help-seeking until a point of crisis<sup>7</sup>, the window of opportunity for health care professionals to effectively engage with their male clients is often compressed, making it even more critical to retain them in the recommended treatment pathway.

For men who do access mental health services, the overall dropout rate from psychological support and therapy was reported to be 45%, of which 27% accessed therapy once and did not return. **The most common reasons for dropout were lack of connection with the therapist (55%) and the sense that therapy lacked progress (20%).<sup>8</sup>**

Health care professionals in Australia do not receive dedicated training that gives them the confidence and competencies to effectively reach, respond and retain men in care.

Critically, **while 75% of suicides in Australia are men, mental health workers report limited capacity to effectively engage and respond to men when they seek support**, and many men report finding counselling to be a foreign environment that doesn't feel 'male friendly', resulting in men dropping out of mental health treatment.<sup>9</sup>



# 45%

of men dropout of psychological support and therapy with unmet mental health needs

<sup>6</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2020-21), National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/mental-health/national-study-mental-health-and-wellbeing/2020-21>

<sup>7</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2024. Medicare mental health services 2022-23 data tables

<sup>8</sup> Seidler, Zac E., et al. "Men's dropout from mental health services: Results from a survey of Australian men across the life span." American journal of men's health 15.3 (2021): 15579883211014776.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid



## WHAT IS NEEDED

A health system that is equipped to respond to the particular needs, challenges and cultural issues facing men and boys is the most promising way to improve their health outcomes. Positive healthcare experiences for men and boys from an early age encourages lifelong proactive and timely engagement with healthcare.

This includes ensuring health professionals have understanding and expertise in the complexities of men's mental health, suicide, and its link with masculine norms.

Men in Mind® is a world-first online continuing professional development training program for mental health practitioners – psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health occupational therapists, mental health nurses, and social workers – that meets this need.

Developed by Movember, the program has been shown through rigorous, gold standard research trials to significantly improve practitioners' confidence and competence to engage and respond to help-seeking men. Delivered online and self-paced, it is a highly cost-effective model.

The Tasmanian Government and Movember have already partnered to co-fund a roll-out of Men in Mind® across their public mental health workforce, with growing interest from other state governments across the country.

Building on the success of Men in Mind®, the Australian Government has recently contracted Movember to develop an online hub and e-CPD to enhance the knowledge, skills, and confidence of primary health care practitioners, including GPs, nurses, and pharmacists. Future opportunities have also been discussed, focusing on developing tertiary curricula resources for emerging health care practitioners, expanding e-CPD offerings, and establishing a community of practice portal. This work aims to help primary health care practitioners better reach, respond to, and retain men in services during their initial access points into the system. With this work underway, it is crucial to ensure that the mental health workforce is equipped to support men experiencing distress and mental health difficulties. There is now an opportunity and a need to develop a partnership between the Commonwealth, all state and territory governments, Primary Health Networks (PHNs), and Movember to support a co-funded national rollout of this evidence-based and specialised training to the mental health workforce across public, private, and community settings.

**This would involve a commitment from the Australian Government to:**

- Co-fund with the states and territories and Movember access to free Men in Mind® training for mental health practitioners working in the public sector.
- Co-fund with Movember access to free Men in Mind® training through the PHNs for mental health practitioners working in the community setting either in private practice or in not-for-profit community mental health organisations.

## FUNDING BREAKDOWN

Total funding of **\$11.5 million** over four years for a large-scale rollout of the Men in Mind® online CPD training to the national mental health workforce through publicly funded services and PHNs including the cost of the training licenses, marketing and promotion costs and evaluation.

This critical investment, combined with co-funding from Movember and state and territory governments, will support free training for almost **32,000 mental health practitioners**, who deliver mental health assessment and treatment to hundreds of thousands of men and boys each year.

A breakdown of the mental health workforce that would benefit by State and Territory is available on request.

This critical investment, combined with co-funding from Movember and state and territory governments, will support **free training for almost 32,000 mental health practitioners**, who deliver mental health assessment and treatment to hundreds of thousands of men and boys each year.



### 3.

## Fast-tracking the knowledge base into solutions

#### PRIORITY 3:

\$5.5 million over four years for a research program and innovation pilots to continue to build the knowledge base on the relationship between men's health, masculine norms, healthy relationships and violence.

Movember is partnering with leading experts in men's health to break new ground in the field of masculinities. By exploring how a man's relationship with his masculinity – his self-perception and behaviours – shapes his health, this research will uncover the complex factors influencing men's emotional wellbeing, relationships, and help-seeking behaviours. A key focus of this research is understanding the connection between violence and men's health, including the various ways that violence impacts men - whether as victims, witnesses, or perpetrators. The insights generated will be critical in reshaping how men's health is understood and addressed, with a particular focus on empowering men to make positive behavioural changes that support their health and wellbeing.

The findings will serve as a strategic resource for the Australian Government and its partners, guiding future investments, interventions, and funding priorities. By providing data on where men are thriving and where they need support, this research will shape program design, grant-making, and policy decisions. It will lay the groundwork for new health initiatives that centre on men's unique needs and improve how health systems and governments engage with men's wellbeing.

Aligned with its commitment to improving men's health, the Movember Institute for Men's Health has invested \$3.2 million<sup>10</sup> in research on how online platforms and media environments influence the mental health of young men. By fostering a community of practice across Australia, this partnership will develop evidence-based strategies for promoting healthy masculinities. The research will examine how masculinities are evolving across generations and how media content shapes men's health and relationships. This investment will help fast-track effective solutions that support men in maintaining healthier lives, relationships, families, and communities.

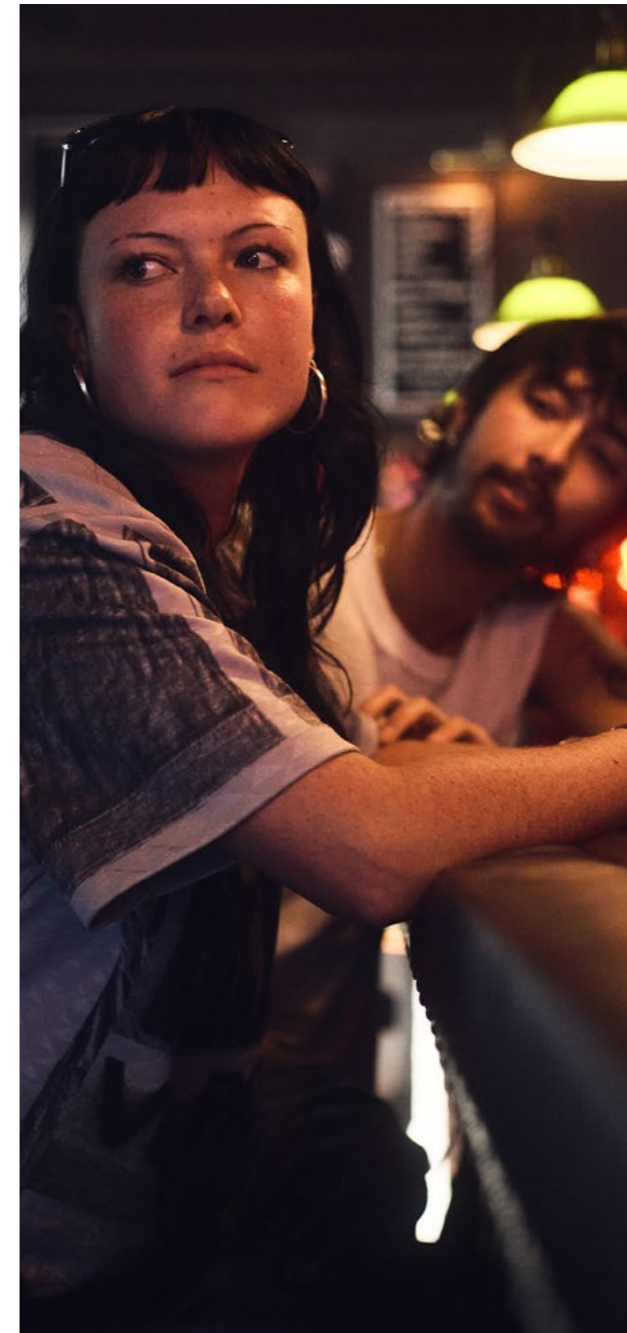
#### WHY ARE AUSSIE MEN FEELING LEFT OUT OR LEFT BEHIND?

From healthcare to education and social structures, men are often overlooked by the very systems designed to support their health and wellbeing. Movember's research seeks to change this by exploring how these systems shape men's behaviours, perceptions of masculinity, and overall health and wellbeing. The goal is to identify new ways to make systems more responsive to men's needs and to help them build healthier relationships with themselves, their mental wellbeing, and others.

#### WHAT IS NEEDED

**Building on recent investments by Movember and the Australian Government in research and innovation, a sustained investment is required to:**

- Support ongoing research and data system improvements to better understand the way men and boys are influenced by online representations of masculinity.
- Expand pilots of promising early intervention programs that engage with boys and young men to develop healthier and more satisfying personal relationships through healthy masculinities.
- Test and trial primary prevention approaches to target and combat the rise of online misogyny and radicalisation with online interventions.



#### FUNDING BREAKDOWN & BENEFICIARIES

Funding of \$5.5 million over four years will expand the scope and reach of existing research and innovation strategies, including the flagship Healthy Masculinities Trial and Evaluation (Healthy MaTE).

Movember proposes an ongoing knowledge and innovation partnership with the Australian Government and supported by our partners to co-design a program of activities over the four-year investment period. By offering clear data on where men are thriving and where they need greater focus, its adoption will reshape how health systems, advocacy groups, and governments engage with men's health and well-being.

<sup>10</sup> Department of Social Services (DSS) announcement, 2024. <https://www.dss.gov.au/about-the-department/news/70266>



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Contact [advocacy@movember.com](mailto:advocacy@movember.com) to find out more