Australian Eating Disorders Research & Translation Strategy 2021-2031

Preventing eating disorders and improving the lives of people with eating disorders and their families is possible.

To achieve this, the Australian Government has invested in the development of a national Strategy to support the highest quality research, and the translation of that research into practice, to deliver the best possible outcomes for the communities we serve.

Underpinned by the principles of co-design, delivering impact, providing research supports, collaboration and diversity, the strategic priorities and recommendations provide the roadmap to establish eating disorders as a national research priority.

This Strategy represents the collective thinking of hundreds of individuals and key stakeholders nationally. It has been endorsed by national and state eating disorder organisations.
To date, research innovation in the field of eating disorders has been hampered by insufficient resourcing, reliance on pockets of excellence, and a lack of coherent vision and plan, resulting in intermittent discoveries and limited uptake of the evidence.

What does the strategy say?

Research plays a vital role in protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of Australians. It is central to the task of preventing illness and reducing the morbidity and unacceptably high death rate from eating disorders.

Why does Australia need a National Research & Translation Strategy?

Research innovation in the field of eating disorders has been hampered by insufficient resourcing, reliance on pockets of excellence, and a lack of coherent vision and plan, resulting in intermittent discoveries and limited uptake of the evidence.

70% of people with an eating disorder will not receive treatment and of those who do only 20% receive an evidence-based treatment.

Australian Mental Health Research Spend Per Affected Individual:

- Eating Disorders: $1.70
- Anxiety Disorders: $5.08
- Depression: $19.81
- Schizophrenia: $197.14
- Autism: $23.89
How did we get here?

A dynamic co-production

Led by InsideOut Institute, the Strategy has been developed through a national consultation and collaboration process, building on decades of work of the Australian research community, clinicians, service providers, eating disorder organisations and the vibrant and engaged Australian lived experience community.

What needs to be achieved?

We are united in our determination to prevent eating disorders and improve the health and wellbeing of those at risk of developing an eating disorder, their families and supports in Australia. The co-designed strategic priorities, recommendations and actions outlined in this document identify how we can support that objective by improving knowledge generation and the use of knowledge in practice in Australia.
How research and translation will happen

What is going to be different?

All individuals, organisations and groups have an important contribution to make in delivering on the vision and priorities in this strategy. Collectively, we will work to collaborate across relevant parts of the system to:

- Implement evidence into all areas across the system
- Value lived experience input
- Identify and respond to key knowledge gaps required to improve the health and wellbeing of Australians with eating disorders
- Ensure relevant areas across the system translate and take up research findings
- Collaborate to change systems and practices

Research translation and implementation is vital. Without these critical elements, research can’t lead to improved health outcomes for people and communities.