

## PROJECT ILMEN

### By MEDIBIO LIMITED

COVID-19 has pushed Australia’s mental health to its limits and to the top of the agenda - but despite the Federal Budget’s historic \$2.6 billion investment in mental health and suicide prevention, everyday Australians are struggling to find adequate support during these unprecedented times. Even with the increase in the number of ‘Better Access’ Medicare-subsidised psychological therapy sessions available, recent studies show that tele-psych use has declined as users turn to alternative support through apps.

Following another unprecedented year of uncertainty, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in economic turmoil which has negatively affected many people’s mental health and created new complications for those already dealing with mental health concerns. For those few who thrived during the pandemic, reopening is causing increased anxiety, while others are coping with stress caused by unhealthy habits developed during lockdowns, such as substance abuse and social anxiety (APA, 2020).

### COST TO GOVERNMENT

Mental ill-health reduces people’s participation in the workforce. To capture the effect of mental illness on participation in the workforce and productivity, the Productivity Commission modelled the cost of forgone output due to mental illness to be between \$12.2 billion and \$22.5 billion in 2018-19. <sup>1</sup>

### WHERE WE CAN HELP

Small businesses are the backbone of the Australian economy and account for between 97.4% and 98.4% of all businesses. Small business employs over 4.7 million people and 41% of the business workforce, making it Australia’s biggest employer. As of December 2019, small business also employed 165,197 apprentices and trainees, which represents 61% of Australia’s apprentices and trainees. <sup>2</sup>

The past 18 months has placed a significant fiscal and emotional burden on small businesses and their employees due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The mental health issues related to COVID 19 are well documented and support is needed in this often underserved sector of the workforce.

We believe that Medibio’s corporate mental wellbeing tool, ilumen™, will have significant utility for small businesses and will be the solution to quick and easy roll out of mental health support to keep working Australians well.

Support from the Federal Government, will allow Medibio to make ilumen available to a significant portion of the Australian workforce. The data collected will establish a benchmark of the mental wellbeing of small businesses and their employees, including “hot-spots” according to geographic locations and industries.

These findings will be reported to the Federal Government to inform mental health policy, particularly as it relates to corporate Australia.

Small businesses account for nearly 98% of all Australian businesses and typically do not have a budget available to allocate to wellness services, particularly mental health support programs, given the size or the nature of their work. We propose that Medibio provide our corporate mental health tool, ilumen, free of charge to all Australian small businesses who would ordinarily not have access to mental health support services for their workforce. This project is supported by Hon Steve Irons, Federal Member for Swan.



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/mental-health/report/mental-health-appendices.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.asbfeo.gov.au/sites/default/files/ASBFE0%20Small%20Business%20Counts%20Dec%202020%20v2.pdf>

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### WHAT IS ILMEN

ilumen™ is an early intervention solution, offering objective data to manage and improve employee mental wellness. ilumen™ provides actionable and valuable insights that are backed by science. ilumen™ works in three easy steps;

1. **ASSESS** - Users download the ilumen™ app and/or visit the ilumen web platform to complete a series of questions to assess their mental wellbeing.
2. **TRACK** - ilumen™ allows individuals to track assessment data and biometric data like sleep, activity and important heart-rate metrics by connecting a wearable device (optional)
3. **MANAGE** - ilumen provides a 'well-being snapshot' that screens for early symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress. If an employee is assessed as 'high risk' they receive a personalised email with guidance and recommendations.

### THE SOLUTION IS READY TO GO

Medibio has created a web page that will serve as a low risk, low touch structure for the Australian Government; <http://ilumenstage.wpengine.com/covid/>. This website will allow Australian small business owners to OPT-IN to the mental health program for their people, free of charge, supported by the Australian Government.

The form requires six fields to be filled out to ensure the business qualifies for the program. Once this is complete Medibio will qualify the business and grant their employees access to the wellbeing platform.

### ADVANTAGES TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Medibio has developed a turn-key mental wellness solution that will give Australian small businesses access to support and resources needed to cope with the mental health impact of COVID today and beyond. While the app is designed to benefit the individual user as a tool to support their own mental health, the data collected is aggregated and de-identified to provide consistent, up-to-date insights into the mental wellbeing of Australians to relevant government bodies and commissions. These insights can be leveraged to shape future mental health programs and initiatives, and even be used to influence how funding is allocated in the future. Australia has the opportunity to position itself as a leader in corporate mental health support of its citizens on the global stage, tapping into current technology, science-based methodology and cutting-edge data-driven insights.

ilumen™ is Australian owned and developed, based on Australian research and is available in the market today, it meets a need beyond what is being provided by telehealth services and other frontline mental health services. With the support of the Federal Government, this app could be accessed by all Australian small businesses interested in putting their employees' mental health first.

### BUDGET FUNDING REQUEST

We believe that ilumen is ideally placed to be included as a Head to Health resource. For a solution to be included as a Head to Health resource, the service/product requires Federal Government funding. Medibio could provide ilumen to all Australian small businesses (4,700,000 people) for \$5,875,000 per annum (\$1.25 pp). This would allow ALL AUSTRALIAN small business employees FREE access to ilumen.

ilumen could be used to direct users;

- To existing government services;
- To communicate what services are available
- To reduce the strain on mental health plan usage .

Medibio will provide de-identified data to the Federal Government, presenting unique mental health data pertaining to small businesses in Australia.

