



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

## **Calls for Governments' coronavirus stimulus packages to include the community sector so they can continue to support those in need**

Restrictions on mass gatherings and calls for social isolation have caused the cancellation of many critical fund-raising events for charities around the country, significantly affecting their ability to deliver much-needed support services in this time of crisis.

"[Menslink](#) has just today cancelled our annual Big Night Out and other associated fundraising events between now and the end of the financial year, which will see us lose around \$250,000, or 20% of our total income," said Martin Fisk, Menslink's Chief Executive.

"This loss is just the tip of the iceberg, and the social impacts of what's about to come will be far-reaching across the community and charity sectors," continued Martin.

Menslink is a community service providing free mental health support to thousands of young men and their families across the ACT region. Their objective is to assist young men get through tough times with the least amount of harm to themselves and those around them and they provide free counselling, mentoring and school education programs to those in need. Menslink relies on donations and corporate sponsorship in order to offer their free services.

"Let's be clear, we are not about to cut services at this critical time for our young guys and their families, but as the days unfold and there are more updates on coronavirus, it becomes even more apparent that the charity sector is facing very significant challenges. Donations and corporate sponsorships are heading off a cliff at a time when society need the community services we offer more than ever. It's not just Menslink, but every charity that runs a fundraising event.

"We know that in times of stress, depression, anxiety and family violence all increase. Our services and those of other charities are needed more than ever, and yet loss of income will hamper our ability to meet demand.

"Without an additional government stimulus package to replace lost income, we run the risk of having to cut services, let alone being able to meet increasing demand. That would be a terrible outcome for government and our society. We are calling on both the Federal Government and ACT Government to extend any stimulus packages developed for small to medium businesses to also cover the small to medium community charity sector," concluded Martin.

For more information on Menslink and their services, go to [www.menslink.org.au](http://www.menslink.org.au)

**For more information, images or to arrange an interview, please contact Lauren Griffiths at Threesides on 0417 409 264 or [lauren.griffiths@threesides.com.au](mailto:lauren.griffiths@threesides.com.au)**