



WAAMH
Western Australian Association
for Mental Health



MEDIA RELEASE

Budget 2015: Another wasted opportunity for mental health

Community Mental Health Australia (CMHA) welcomes the Commonwealth Government's commitment to work with States and Territories to develop a new National Mental Health Plan. However, CMHA is very disappointed the budget foreshadows no action on implementing other recommendations from the National Mental Health Commission's Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services (The Review), proposing only an Expert Reference Group to consider the recommendations.

CMHA president Elizabeth Crowther said another Expert Reference Group and more consultation were not needed.

"The Review contains a range of recommendations which can be implemented now and within the existing budget," Ms Crowther said.

"We, the experts, already provided our input to The Review and what we need is action on the directions the sector has been putting forward for several years."

There is broad agreement across the mental health sector on the need to shift the focus of the mental health system from acute care to supports in the community, urgently clarifying how the National Disability Insurance Scheme will support people with psychosocial disability, provide more integrated services, and a range of the other recommendations on The Review.

CMHA urges the Commonwealth Government to establish a small implementation group and get on with the job of implementing the recommendations.

"We've had plenty of discussion. Now we need action," Ms Crowther said. "The Commission was specifically instructed to develop recommendations, which didn't require additional funding, so we can implement the recommendations without further delay.

"The message this budget sends is one of more discussion, more delays, and no action to deliver better supports and care to people with mental health issues."

About CMHA

Community Mental Health Australia (CMHA) is a coalition of the eight peak community mental health organisations from each State and Territory, established to provide leadership and direction. The coalition promotes the importance of community mental health and recovery services across Australia and the benefits they provide to people with a lived experience of mental illness. CMHA provides a unified voice for more than 800 community-based, non-government organisations who work with mental health consumers and carers across the nation who are members of, or affiliated with, our coalition members.

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