



WAAMH

Western Australian Association
for Mental Health

MEDIA RELEASE

28th April 2014

Open the Door to Real Homes for People Needing Long Term Mental Health Support

People needing long term mental health support are banging at the door to get out of Graylands Hospital and into real homes, and the Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH) says the community should welcome them.

The call comes in response to Coroner Barry King's comments about the life of a patient who spent 20 years at Graylands Hospital, because she had nowhere else to go, as an "unmitigated tragedy". King also described the "uphill battle staff at Graylands are fighting in a hospital that is outdated, crowded and lacking resources".

Head of the Council of Official Visitors Debora Colvin said of the issue: "[the] strange place we find ourselves in of people banging at the door to get into mental health services with people at the other end banging to get out...but nowhere else to go."

WAAMH president Alison Xamon welcomed Mental Health Minister Helen Morton's statement that the government was seriously considering the future of Graylands. WAAMH agrees the facilities at Graylands are outdated, not conducive to recovery and supports reinvestment that would enable more people to access a range of supported home-like services in their local communities (both metropolitan and regional).

"However, there is still considerable misunderstanding of mental health and WAAMH believes there must be sustained public education about the safety and desirability of supported home-like services located in the community," Ms Xamon said.

WAAMH is also concerned about ensuring any resources currently invested in mental health remain fully invested in mental health.

"Even though the number of people experiencing mental health issues is increasing compared to other health issues, funding for it remains comparatively less than for other health issues," Ms Xamon said.

About WAAMH

The Western Australian Association for Mental Health is the peak body representing the community-managed mental health sector in WA. With more than 100 organisational and individual members, our vision is to lead the way in supporting and promoting the human rights of people with mental illness and their families and carers, through the provision of inclusive, well-governed community-based services focused on recovery. WAAMH advocates for effective public policy on mental health issues, delivers workforce training and development and promotes positive attitudes to mental health and recovery. Further information at <http://www.waamh.org.au>

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WAAMH - Peak body representing the community-managed mental health sector in WA

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