



**THE HON PETER DUTTON MP
MINISTER FOR HEALTH
MINISTER FOR SPORT**

MEDIA RELEASE

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Abbott Government Commitment to Mental Health

The Minister for Health, the Hon Peter Dutton, MP announced today the first Australian Government actions to progress mental health as a key priority area.

Marking World Mental Health Day, Mr Dutton said there was clearly a need for a comprehensive review of mental health services to ensure that they are delivered to those people most in need, and that funding is provided to those programmes that have proven to be most effective on the frontline.

"People with mental illness deserve the same standards of access and treatment as those with a physical illness and I have asked the National Mental Health Commission to do a thorough review of all existing services, state and federal and non-government, to assess how well and efficiently they are helping their clients," Mr Dutton said.

"The Review aims to ensure services are being properly targeted, that services are not being duplicated and that programmes are not being unnecessarily burdened by red tape.

"As part of this process, we will seek to identify gaps in both mental health research and workforce development and training. We will also consider the particular challenges of providing services in rural, regional and remote Australia."

Other areas of committed funding are:

- **Establishment of a National Centre for Excellence in Youth Mental Health.** At a cost of \$18 million over four years, the new National Centre will be established by the Orygen Youth Health Research Centre in Victoria which will conduct clinical trials on cutting edge treatments for young people and train a new generation of mental health workers.
- **Development of a comprehensive e-mental health platform.** With funding of \$5 million over three years the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre will develop a new, comprehensive e-mental health platform to make it easier for young people to access advice and support 24 hours a day.
- **headspace:** Building on the investment in *headspace* youth mental health centres, the government will expand the number of sites around Australia to 100.
- **Dementia Research:** The government confirms that it will provide a further \$200 million over five years to Australian scientists and researchers working on ways to prevent or cure dementia, a brain disease that is expected to affect nearly one million Australians by 2050,

Mr Dutton said in Australia there is a lot of evidence that people are not getting the mental health help they need, especially young people.

"More research is urgently needed to develop better ways of preventing and treating mental illness and the services provided must be guided by evidence of what works and what doesn't.

"The Review by the Mental Health Commission is the first step in establishing how we should be funding mental health programmes into the future so that people can have better access to the treatments and services they need as they struggle with mental illness," Mr Dutton said.

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