

MEDIA ALERT

Mother of Bondi victim and leading mental health organisations come to Parliament

Mental health organisations are convening in Canberra on Wednesday 3 July 2024 for a roundtable, hosted by Allegra Spender MP and the Black Dog Institute.

They will be joined by Elizabeth Young, the mother of Jade Young, who died in the recent Bondi Junction stabbing attack. Elizabeth will share her story about how her family has struggled to find mental health support after the tragedy. The roundtable will also hear from a range of consumer and carer advocates.

These mental health organisations are calling on the federal government to address critical gaps in mental health care for those with complex conditions, and to include mental health funding and reform in the upcoming National Health Reform Agreement (NHRA).

They say gaps in current Federal and State/Territory systems leave thousands of Australians with severe and complex mental health needs without adequate support, causing distress in the community and increasing costs to the health system.

Federal and State/Territory governments have begun important reform work, and Mental Health Ministers will meet in the coming weeks to progress this further.

Press Conference:

When Wednesday, 3 July at 9.15 AM

Where Mural Hall, Parliament House

Who **Elizabeth Young**, Mother of Bondi victim and mental health advocate.
Allegra Spender MP, Member for Wentworth, local member for Bondi.
Kerry Hawkins, National Mental Health Commissioner, President of the Western Australian Association for Mental Health (WAAMH).
Eileen McDonald, Consumer and Carer Advocate, CEO of Bipolar Australia
Geoff Radford, CEO of the NT Mental Health Coalition.
Nayonika Bhattacharya, Consumer Advocate, Youth Advisor for Multicultural Youth Affairs Network (MYAN).

Background:

After the tragic events in Bondi Junction, Federal and State/Territory Governments agreed to a full-day Mental Health Ministers Meeting to discuss and agree on joint action to close the mental health service gap.

This gap has been identified as urgent and requiring action by numerous reports, including from the Productivity Commission, the House of Representative Report, and the National Health Reform Agreement Interim Report.

The organisations have endorsed a series of requests:

- **Long-Term Funding and Reform:** Federal and State/Territory Governments must agree on funding arrangements and a long-term roadmap for reform to close the service gap for the ‘missing middle’ and people with complex mental health needs.
- **Full-Day Mental Health Ministers Meeting:** This crucial negotiation should take place during the planned full-day Mental Health Ministers Meeting.
- **Inclusion in National Health Reform Agreement:** Mental health reform should be included in the upcoming NHRA to ensure new mental health services can be sustainably funded across Federal and State/Territory Governments.

(see attached joint statement by mental health organisations for more detail)

Quotes attributable to Allegra Spender MP:

“The tragic events at Bondi Junction in April highlight the urgent need to better support people with complex mental health conditions.

“Since the attack, I have been contacted by the family and friends of people suffering with complex conditions, telling me of the challenges they face every day caring for their loved ones. People are not just falling through the cracks, they are falling through chasms.

“Today’s roundtable is about elevating their voices and understanding how much more there is to do to better support people with complex mental health conditions.

“There are no easy answers and I acknowledge the important work that federal and state governments have already commenced to provide better and more integrated support.

The unifying call from mental health organisations is for a long-term funding and reform, agreed during the upcoming Mental Health Ministers’ Meeting and enshrined in the NHRA.”

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Mental health organisations endorsing this statement:

Arafmi Ltd Carers Queensland	Mental Health Coordinating Council
Australian College of Mental Health Nurses	Mental Health Families and Friends Tasmania
Australian Society for Psychological Medicine	Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP)
BEING – Mental Health Consumers NSW	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) NSW/ACT
Bipolar Australia Limited	Tandem Carers Victoria
Black Dog Institute	Wayahead (Mental Health Association NSW)
Mental Health Australia	Yourtown
Mental Health Carers Australia	
Mental Health Carers NSW	