

24 June 2016 | For immediate release

Election 2016 – Still time for action on mental health

As the Federal Election campaign enters its final week, Mental Health Australia is renewing its call for political leaders to commit to real targets for improving the lives of people affected by mental illness and their carers.

“There’s still time for real action on mental health,” said Mental Health Australia CEO Frank Quinlan.

“It has been encouraging to hear the parties talking about mental health in the second half of the campaign, and there have been some important initial commitments, but to fix Australia’s broken mental health system we strong long-term commitments.”

Mental Health Australia’s election report card outlined the commitments of the Coalition, Labor and the Greens on five key issues:

- A reduction in the national suicide rate
- Improvements in the physical health of people with a mental illness
- Increased employment rates for mental health consumers and carers
- An increase in mental health consumer and carer participation and choice in national policy design and implementation
- Support for the full reinvestment of cost efficiencies and savings into mental health programs and services.

Earlier in the campaign Mental Health Australia welcomed the commitment from the ALP and the Australian Greens to reduce the national suicide rate by 50% in ten years, and has called on the Coalition to match this commitment.

The Coalition’s response to date has reiterated its commitment to achieving systemic reform largely through a regional approach to mental health service delivery via Primary Health Networks.

“The mental health system is in the midst of unprecedented change and it is more important than ever for our political leaders to provide national leadership, with investment guided by whole-of-life targets for improving mental health outcomes, and specific indicators to demonstrate progress and performance,” said Mr Quinlan.

Mental Health Australia’s full report card, along with each of the parties’ full responses, can be downloaded here – <https://mhaustralia.org/general/election-2016>

Media Contact: Jo Huxley – 0439 486 611

