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## One Budget cannot achieve serious mental health reform

Any Budget night announcement of new measures for mental health, or the lack thereof, must not distract from the pressing need for long-term, systemic reform, Mental Health Australia said today.

"We must not lose our appetite for the decade-long reform outlined in the National Mental Health Commission's Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services," CEO of Mental Health Australia Frank Quinlan said.

"The Commission's report highlighted the systemic failure of current arrangements in the mental health system, such as poor planning and coordination, which has resulted in duplication, overlap and gaps in services.

"We must continue the long-term reform process. The outcome of a single Budget should not distract us from our mission to create the best mental health system in the world."

The mental health sector is ready for reform, and Mental Health Australia's Blueprint for Action on Mental Health has laid out tangible steps to take right now to make a real difference to people living with mental illness and those who care for them:

1. Agree on what we want to achieve
2. Be clear on who is responsible for what
3. Increase consumer and carer participation and choice
4. Match services to need
5. Get the incentives right to drive better outcomes
6. Invest at the right time to achieve the greatest benefit
7. Keep governments and services accountable

"As the Commission's Review points out, for too long vulnerable people have been left to navigate a complex and fragmented system. Now is our opportunity to work together to build the mental health system Australians deserve and expect.

"Nothing should distract us from this vital job."

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