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## Party leaders asked to support long term goals for mental health

"Today we are asking party leaders to support mental health. There are important reforms underway and these cannot be forgotten during the current electoral cycle," said Mental Health Australia CEO Frank Quinlan.

"Party leaders, indeed all parties and candidates, can show their support for mental health by committing to long term measures to improve mental health outcomes in Australia.

"For too long changing political fortunes have left services with shifting priorities and uncertain funding. This creates an environment where people who live with mental illness and their carers face the difficult task of navigating a complex and ever changing system.

"This election, we want to see mental health ranked highly amongst our long term, national priorities."

We have written to leaders asking for a long term commitment to:

- Reducing the national suicide rate
- Improving the physical health of people with a mental illness
- Increasing employment rates for people experiencing mental illness and their carers
- An increase in mental health consumer and carer participation and choice in national policy design and implementation
- Maintaining current overall levels of investment in mental health, with measures that support full reinvestment of cost efficiencies and savings

"Mental health reform still has a long way to go," Mr Quinlan said.

"It is vital to the health and wellbeing of millions of Australians that all political parties make a real commitment to improving the lives of people who experience mental illness and their carers."

Mental Health Australia will be producing a 'report card' to be released prior to the election on 2 July outlining the major parties' response to the request.

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