

Tuesday 27 November @ 7.00am

The three mental health questions we will ask Parliamentarians today

Representatives from more than 60 mental health organisations will meet with politicians at Parliament House today, Tuesday 27 November, to ask three key questions ahead of the 2019 Federal Election and Productivity Commission Inquiry.

The **Mental Health Australia Parliamentary Advocacy Day** will see key Ministers, Senators and MPs including Minister for Families and Social Services, The Hon Paul Fletcher MP Minister for Health The Hon Greg Hunt MP, and Shadow Minister for Ageing and Mental Health The Hon Julie Collins MP, meet with over 100 sector delegates to discuss mental health reform.

Advocacy efforts will focus on ensuring policy makers recognise the value of investment in mental health, asking parties to articulate their policies ahead of the election, address gaps in the NDIS, and keep funding programs that work while the Productivity Commission Inquiry is underway.

Mental Health Australia CEO Frank Quinlan says the timing is right for the sector as a whole to ask politicians to commit to expanding and reorienting mental health reform.

"Firstly, we will be asking the major parties to prepare standalone mental health policies as part of their 2019 election platforms and we will assess these policies ahead of the election," said Mr Quinlan.

"We are looking for major parties to articulate their plans for systematically increasing investment in mental health services and programs over the coming decade, along with plans to address the social determinants of mental health."

"Secondly, we will be asking for urgent commitments to address the major gaps that are opening up in psychosocial support and community based mental health as the NDIS is rolled out, and as related programs are being wound back.

"As we know, nearly 800,000 Australians report experiencing serious mental illness each year. Estimates suggest some 300,000 would benefit from individualised supports. However, only 64,000 will receive supports through the NDIS."








"The current investments in 'continuity of support', new psychosocial support measures, and state-based community mental health, are inadequate to meet this demand. This issue continues to require urgent attention from policy-makers."

"Thirdly, rather than waiting for the Productivity Commission's report in 18 months' time, we will be asking for continued investment in programs and services that are supported by evidence."

"The KPMG and Mental Health Australia Report '*Investing to Save*' provides an excellent starting point for this investment, with well documented initiatives - supported by the very best international evidence - with enormous potential to provide substantial return on investment to governments and the community."

THE 3 QUESTIONS WE'LL ASK POLITICIANS AT OUR PARLIAMENTARY ADVOCACY DAY

 <p>Will you prepare a standalone mental health policy as part of your 2019 Federal Election platform?</p>	 <p>Will you address the major gaps opening up in psychosocial support and community based mental health as the NDIS is rolled out?</p>	 <p>Will you increase investment in mental health programs that work and save money, while the Productivity Commission Inquiry is underway?</p>
--	---	---

 @AUMentalHealth #MentalHealthAustralia | **Mental Health Australia** | mhaustralia.org info@mhaustralia.org 

The 2018 Mental Health Australia Parliamentary Advocacy Day and Members Policy Forum will be held at Parliament House, Canberra TODAY Tuesday 27 November from 9:30am.

Media Contact: Lachlan Searle – 0488 076 088

Alternative Contact: Emily Roser – 0487 322 889

