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Mental Health Australia welcomes funding announcement and new initiatives from Minister for Health

Mental Health Australia has welcomed new funding announcements and initiatives by Minister for Health, The Hon Greg Hunt MP, and has called on the sector to unite for a clear vision.

Speaking at the Grace Groom Memorial Oration in Canberra, Minister Hunt continued his commitment to mental health as a key pillar of health reform.

Announcing an increase in core funding to Mental Health Australia, the Minister also renewed a commitment to prevention, research and practical solutions, allocating more than \$53 million to fund some 47 research projects nationwide.

Mental Health Australia Chair, Ms Jennifer Westacott said the Grace Groom Oration by the Minister and subsequent announcements, advance the case for mental health reform in Australia.

“From the outset, Minister Hunt has been passionate about influencing change in the mental health sector, based on the experience of those living with mental health issues, and that was clear again in this year’s oration,” said Ms Westacott.

“An increase to core funding will provide Mental Health Australia with further certainty, and the ability to continue to support our members and advocate for a long term vision for mental health in Australia.”

“To hear the Minister’s vision for mental health, based on work already undertaken in the Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan is encouraging, and something we will all need to support. Moving to a well-planned implementation will be part of the solution.”

“The vision needs to be bi-partisan, it needs to be a unified vision of the sector, and something we can all make incremental and practical steps towards achieving.”

“At Mental Health Australia our vision is - mentally healthy people, mentally healthy communities – something for us all to strive for.”

The Oration was held following the Mental Health Australia AGM on Tuesday 28 November, where beyondblue CEO Georgie Harman, Network Chair from the Private Mental Health Consumer and Carer Network Janne McMahon, and Batyr CEO Sam Refshauge were named as new board members alongside Jennifer Westacott (Chair), Robyn Kruk, Patrick Hardwick, Christine Morgan, Jono Nicholas and Arthur Papakotsias.

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