

# *Mental health* **BEGINS WITH *Me!***

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**8 Oct 2014**

## **Seven Point Plan for Mental Health**

Mental Health Australia is calling on the Australian Government to lead a decade-long, systemic reform program for mental health, following the outcome of the National Mental Health Commission's Review into Mental Health Services and Programmes.

The call comes as the peak body released a seven point plan to reform Australia's mental health system.

"The Commission's Review is due to be handed to the Australian Government in November," Mental Health Australia CEO Frank Quinlan said today. "But we can't afford to see yet another review into mental health ending up in the bottom drawer, the too-hard basket."

"There has been a review into mental health every 30 months since the Second World War, and yet we still have a fundamentally flawed system where people are not getting services they need."

"What we need is commitment to long-term systemic and fundamental reform of the mental health system. Led by the Australian Government, this commitment must come from all governments and must be funded outside the usual short-term electoral and budgetary cycles."

Mental Health Australia has outlined a seven point plan that lays the foundations for reform. The plan identifies the key areas where agreement and action is needed to reshape the way we address mental illness in Australia.

"Four million Australians will have a mental illness this year. Mental illness costs our economy around \$20 billion in lost productivity annually," Mr Quinlan said.

"Life expectancy for people with a mental illness is up to 30 years lower than the general population. People with mental illness are over-represented in prisons and amongst the homeless. As many as six people die every day from suicide in this country.

"The time for review is coming to an end; the time for action is upon us."

The seven-point plan is attached. For interviews contact Peter O'Rourke 0409 558 723.

**OCTOBER 10** | WORLD MENTAL  
HEALTH DAY

**Mental Health  
Australia**

*What's your mental health promise?* **1010.ORG.AU**