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MEDIA RELEASE

Gillard Government delivers on mental health commitments

The Gillard Government's first budget has delivered on its commitment to mental health with a substantial funding investment and a roadmap for mental health reform in Australia.

The Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA) applauds the measures announced by the Government, most importantly new money into new services to provide mental health care across the lifespan and the establishment of a Mental Health Commission.

"Last year the Minister for Mental Health, Mark Butler, asked the MHCA to facilitate forums across Australia so that he could hear firsthand the views of mental health consumers and carers. This budget demonstrates that the Government has listened to these concerns, especially in providing funding for adults with severe and persist mental illness, funding for youth services and young children, and better accountability and governance measures," said MHCA CEO Frank Quinlan.

"The Government has laid down foundations for lasting mental health reform and there are many very important measures announced in this budget, delivered in tight economic circumstances.

"The Federal Government has set out a mental health reform agenda and the pressure is now on the state and territory governments to take responsibility for their share of mental health care and to work with the Commonwealth and the sector to build on these initiatives.

"The road to lasting reform will take many years but the initiatives announced tonight create an unstoppable momentum for change.

"Today is a very good day for the mental health sector – increased investment, reform and better governance and accountability in mental health," Mr Quinlan said.

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