



Key date: 10 October 2012

## Mental illness – it's more common than you think

One in five people will experience mental illness this year.

It's an astounding statistic but one that for too long has not made headlines.

Mental illness is more common than you think and it touches people of all ages and from all walks of life.

However it's a subject that is too often hidden or stigmatised due to shame or embarrassment. As a result, many thousands of people are left feeling isolated and alone.

This is what the Mental Health Council of Australia will address in its national campaign for World Mental Health Day 2012.

"We want people to know that whoever they are and wherever they live, they're not alone," says Frank Quinlan, CEO of the Mental Health Council of Australia (MHCA).

"By being part of the nation-wide conversation about mental illness, we want to build awareness and understanding of the issue and show people that it's OK to seek help for yourself or for people you care about."

We are very fortunate to once again have the support of our wonderful patrons Ms Jessica Rowe, Mr Peter Overton, Mr Jonathon Welch AM, Professor Allan Fels AO and Mr David Galbally QC, to promote World Mental Health Day on 10 October. In addition, we are delighted to have secured the support of young actor Samara Weaving who has agreed to take our message to a diverse younger audience through the power of social media.

"The onset of mental illness is frequently in the teenage years and our campaign aims to take a preventive stance. It costs so much more to treat people at the crisis stage of mental illness than to focus on maintaining positive mental health. People need to know they are not alone and there is always professional help and support available."

As part of the activities planned for National Mental Health Week the MHCA will be running a national photography competition and will also hold private screenings of the new Australian movie 'Mental' starring Toni Collette and Anthony La Paglia in Sydney and Canberra. Jessica Rowe will also deliver the Grace Groom Memorial Oration at Hotel Realm, Canberra on Tuesday 9 October. This event is open to the public and details are available at [www.1010.org.au](http://www.1010.org.au). Follow the conversation on Twitter at #wmhd2012.

For more information on World Mental Health Day or to arrange an interview or photograph please contact: Nicky White (0417 259 654) or Katrina Duncan (0420 804 832) at The Shannon Company.