



23 April 2010

Mental Health Discrimination Costs the Nation: New Report

A report will be launched nationally in Brisbane today (23/4/10) that reveals how Australia can reduce the cost-burden of mental ill health on the nation.

Currently, the cost of mental ill health is estimated at 3%- 4% of Australia's GDP.

The report, 'From Discrimination to Social Inclusion: a review of the anti- stigma initiatives in mental health,' presents the evidence from international anti- stigma mental health campaigns; and outlines recommendations for a similar Australian initiative.

The report includes a foreword from Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor- General of Australia, which states, "This comprehensive and informed literature review brings world best practice and emerging research to bear on mental illness and social inclusion in context."

Senator Ursula Stephens, Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector who will launch the report said, "*From Discrimination to Social Inclusion* is a review of national significance, and supported by more than 800 community organisations working in mental health Australia wide."

"This review is a powerful step in an anti-stigma campaign which will work towards a more socially inclusive society," she said.

CEO of the Queensland Alliance, and Board Member of the Mental Health Council of Australia, Jeff Cheverton said, "Australians spend A\$4.4 billion annually through lost productivity, health and social services, disability pensions, lost taxes and missed opportunity. These are the costs of social exclusion."

"An initiative like this in Australia will not only save taxpayer dollars, it will demonstrate how Australians can support their family, friends or work colleagues in emotional or mental distress."

For more information, interviews or to arrange to attend the launch, please contact the Queensland Alliance as below.

The launch will be held at the Sebel and Citigate, King George Square, Brisbane. The launch is scheduled for 1.30pm.

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