



**THE HON MARK BUTLER MP**

**Minister for Mental Health and Ageing**

**Minister for Social Inclusion**

**Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Mental Health Reform**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

27 November 2012

**First National Mental Health Report Card Released**

Minister for Mental Health Mark Butler today welcomed the release of National Mental Health Commission's first National Report Card on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention.

The annual Report Card was a 2010 election commitment of the Gillard Government and forms a central part of the Government's record \$2.2 billion mental health reform plan.

Mr Butler said the Report Card reminds us of the significant needs of an estimated 3.2 million Australians each year who live with a mental health issues, and highlights the importance of the Government's investments to grow and improve the mental health system.

"We asked the National Mental Health Commission to put Australia's mental health services under the spotlight to give us insights into service gaps, where governments need to do more and where services are working well," Mr Butler said.

"The Report Card has highlighted important areas for reform to support better outcomes for people with mental illness in areas such as employment, physical health and housing."

"The Report Card will be produced by the Commission every year from 2012 onwards and will provide guidance to all governments."

"The Commission's work reminds us that meaningful and strategic progress will require partnership between consumers, carers, all governments, NGOs and mental health professionals."

Mr Butler thanked the Commission, led by Professor Allan Fels, for its work saying the Report Card highlighted key strategic objectives to the overall improvement of the system that supports people with mental illness.

"The Report Card challenges all of us – government, services providers, professionals and the broader community – to better support those living with and recovering from mental illness to live a contributing life."

The Report Card notes the need for all governments to work together and invest in better services for people with mental illness.

"The Gillard Government's \$200 million National Partnership Agreement with the states and territories

– which forms part of the national reform plan – has seen a renewed emphasis on the way mainstream services like hospitals and housing respond to the needs of people with mental illness.”

“But the Report Card says there is significant work to be done by states and territories, including to ensure people are not discharged from state-based mental health services and hospitals into homelessness.”

“The Report Card also notes that states and territories need to work on a better, more consistent approach to seclusion, restraint and involuntary treatment.”

Mr Butler said the Gillard Government’s \$2.2 billion mental health reform plan was already having an impact on the ground.

“We’re seeing good progress with the rollout of headspace youth mental health services, the online mental health portal, the expansion of the Access to Allied Psychological Services program and more personal helpers and mentors.”

“But what is clear from this Report Card is that there is more road ahead of us than there is behind us and we all need to take up the challenge of working together to build a better service system – a more inclusive society – for people with mental illness.”

For more information, visit [www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au)

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