



**Senator the Hon Brett Mason  
Parliamentary Secretary to the  
Minister for Health and Ageing**

**The Hon Bruce Scott MP  
Member for Maranoa**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

11 October 2007

BM51/07

### **More funding to help people with mental illness**

The Australian Government today announced further funding to help more Queenslanders living with severe mental illness to better participate in their local communities.

People in four Queensland communities – Emerald, Gladstone, Mackay and Townsville – would benefit from the increased funding of more than \$650,000, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing, Senator Brett Mason, said.

The new funding brings to more than \$20 million the amount being provided for a total of 60 grants for activities across Australia under the Government's Support for Day to Day Living in the Community Program.

Senator Mason said the program was about helping Australians with a severe mental disorder to attain their personal goals in a range of social, recreational and educational areas — for instance, computer education, cooking, and sporting and cultural pursuits.

“Giving people with mental illness the opportunity to take on useful tasks and play active social roles can make an important contribution to their recovery,” he said.

“This is real, practical assistance. For instance, in Emerald, where the Schizophrenia Fellowship of Queensland will provide the service, this latest initiative will provide 35 medium support and 10 drop-in places. This means on-the-ground help for people in Emerald who have severe mental illness, helping them to be more independent, overcome social isolation and increase their ability to take part in community activities.”

The funding was also welcomed by the Member for Maranoa, Bruce Scott.

“Mental health is a major health concern for people in this region and around the nation, and this initiative will improve the lives of many people in Emerald by providing programs to assist in overcoming social isolation and increasing social, recreational and educational activities,” he said.

The Support for Day to Day Living in the Community Program is part of the Government's \$1.9 billion Better Mental Health Services for Australia package.

The funding announcement coincides with National Mental Health Week.

**For more information call Senator Mason's office on ph 02 6277 3756**