



Minister for Health and Aged Care  
Minister for Sport  
**THE HON SUSSAN LEY MP**  
**Media Release**

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**Mental Health Week: Everyone's priority**

Minister for Health Sussan Ley has used the start of Mental Health Week (9 October – 15 October) to promote community awareness about mental health issues and remind Australians about the importance of the social and emotional wellbeing of themselves, their families, loved ones and communities.

Minister Ley said it was important for all of us, whatever our background, age or circumstances, to help each other to identify mental health issues and seek support.

“Mental health is a top priority for the Turnbull Government – and we are tackling it on a range of fronts, through our ongoing mental health reform package,” Minister Ley said.

“We are profoundly committed to preventing people living with mental health issues from falling through the cracks, being shunted from GP to emergency department and back again, or, worst of all, giving up altogether because it's all too hard to get help.

“The Turnbull Government's mental health reforms are aimed at providing better targeted, accessible and effective services for all Australians. The Coalition is committed to strengthening mental health care and suicide prevention with its pledge of \$192 million over the next four years on new mental health care programmes.”

People of all ages, and especially people in rural and regional areas, will benefit from the Government's mental health reforms, which include:

- a new 'stepped care' model which tailors services to people's needs;
- a digital gateway as the first contact point for many people to find information and, where needed, referral to treatment services;
- new 'low intensity' support to individuals, including mental health coaches;
- innovative approaches to provide coordinated care for people with severe mental illness and complex care needs;
- local planning of services, including commissioning of mental health services to fill gaps and meet local needs; and
- greater connection between local services.

The Government's nationwide network of localised primary health care organisations – Primary Health Networks – will play a key role in planning and commissioning mental health services tailored to local communities' needs.

As well, Primary Health Networks will oversee the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program, to ensure such communities have a nursing workforce able to respond to these needs, and provide earlier and better coordinated care.

“These are important, on-the-ground changes,” Minister Ley said. “They will ensure that people can get the right level of care, when they need it, where they need it.”

While mental ill health does not discriminate, it is a fact that 75 per cent of all mental illness manifests itself in people under the age of 25.

The Government will be using this Mental Health Week to promote the importance of acting early to address mental health concerns for young Australians.

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