



THE HON CHRISTOPHER PYNE MP

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing

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Mental health report – a watershed for state mental health services

The Parliamentary Secretary for Health, Christopher Pyne, today welcomed the release in Sydney of the Mental Health Council/Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission report into mental health care.

“The report highlights the great deficiencies in the state government’s delivery of quality and consistent mental health services,” Mr Pyne said.

“The Australian Government has been urging state governments to address these failures for many years. We recognise that sufferers from mental illness need more help, and we have increased our mental health spending exponentially, in sharp contrast to the states.

“My home state of South Australia is of particular note in the report: the Rann Labor Government said in 2003 that more needed to be done for the mentally ill, but has ‘turned a blind eye’ to the mentally ill for the last three and a half years.

“The state governments must stop trying to shift the blame for their failure, and begin to address the issue. They have called on the Australian Government to show greater leadership, and we have accepted this invitation by announcing in July this year, in Brisbane, a review of the national mental health policy.

“I am calling on the state governments to initiate an audit of mental health services in each state. We must hold the level of government that is responsible for mental health, the states, accountable for their failure. Today’s report is a watershed for mental health service delivery in Australia. I hope each state health minister will read it and act on it.”

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