



THE HON CHRISTOPHER PYNE MP

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health and Ageing

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States stand condemned over their failure to deliver on mental health

“Australia’s states and territories stand condemned for their failure to deliver adequate mental health services,” the Australian Government’s Parliamentary Secretary for Health, Christopher Pyne, said today.

Opening the *Mental Health Summer Forum: Double Trouble 2 Comorbidity issues for young people* in Sydney this morning, Mr Pyne highlighted his concerns over state governments continuing to ignore mental health.

“While the Australian Government has increased spending on mental health by 128 per cent since 1993 the states, who are responsible for delivering services, have lagged behind with only a 40 per cent increase,” Mr Pyne said.

“They treat mental health with an out of sight, out of mind approach and yet nine out of 10 leading causes of disease and injury in young men and eight out of 10 leading causes for young women are substance use disorders or mental health disorders.

“One in five Australian will experience a mental illness at some stage in their lives – this is a national health crisis and mentally ill people deserve better from their state and territory governments.”

Mr Pyne said, according to the National Mental Health Report 2004, during the 2001-02 period both Queensland and New South Wales were below the national average of \$92.03 per capita for mental health spending.

“Peter Beattie and Bob Carr are fairly free with the advice they give to the Australian Government but it is time they looked at how their states are performing on this vital health issue.”

“Mr Carr and Mr Beattie seem capable of coming up with money for ‘bread and circuses’ at election time, but they turn a blind eye to the desperate families of those dealing with mental health issues on a daily basis.”

Mr Pyne repeated his challenge to states and territories that if they won’t deliver on mental health care, then perhaps it is time for them to cede their responsibility for mental health to the Commonwealth.

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