

\$5 million national, collaborative approach launched to tackle mental health, substance use and suicide

24 January 2013

WHAT: Launch of the NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use and the NHMRC Centre for Research Excellence in Suicide Prevention.

WHEN: 31 January 2013

TIME: 10:15am for 10:30am

WHERE: Lowy Cancer Research Centre, University of New South Wales
Level 4 Building C25, Gate 9 High St, Randwick.

SPEAKING: The Hon. Minister Tanya Plibersek, Minister for Health; The Hon Mark Butler, Minister for Mental Health and Ageing; Professor Maree Teesson, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre; Professor Helen Christensen, Black Dog Institute.

Interviews will be available with speakers as well as consumers with first-hand experience of the issues.

Mental health and substance use disorders account for more years of life lost due to disability than any other disorder (22.7%) and suicide remains the biggest killer of Australians aged 15 to 40. Nearly half of those with substance use disorders also have a mental illness, rising to more than 90 per cent of people in treatment programs.

Yet suicide and comorbid mental illness and drug and alcohol use problems have been relatively neglected areas for research and early intervention due to their complexity, stigma and the clinical challenges posed by this.

Two new research centres, each funded for \$2.5 million by the National Health & Medical Research Council, bring together for the first time clinical and research experts from Australia, the UK and the US.

These partnerships will not only improve outcomes for individuals, they will greatly improve international understanding of prevention and early interventions for illnesses which contribute to chronic disability and preventable loss of life in Australia and around the world.

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