



1107-1605

**THE HON SUSSAN LEY MP
MINISTER FOR HEALTH
MINISTER FOR AGED CARE
MINISTER FOR SPORT**



Ref No: MC15-020641

Dr Dennis Jensen MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
PO Box 6021
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Jensen

Thank you for your correspondence of 24 November 2015 regarding a petition recently submitted for the consideration of the Standing Committee on Petitions regarding mental health services in the Fleurieu Peninsula, South Australia.

The Australian Government is committed to developing a more effective and efficient mental health system that improves the lives of Australians with or at risk of mental illness. The Government announced its response to the National Mental Health Commission's Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services on 26 November 2015. The Response will transform Commonwealth mental health funding and leadership over the next three years to achieve a more efficient, integrated and sustainable mental health system, to improve mental health service delivery for all Australians and help prevent suicide.

Central to the Government's mental health system reforms are:

- person centred care;
- planning and integration of services at a regional level;
- delivering services within a stepped care approach, to better target services to meet individual and local needs;
- effective early intervention across the lifespan;
- making optimal use of digital mental health services; and
- strengthened national leadership to support systemic change.

The Government will take immediate action in the following concrete, interconnected areas:


- a regional approach, led by Primary Health Networks (PHNs), to plan, integrate and commission mental health services at a local level, in partnership with relevant services and with a new flexible primary mental health care funding pool;
- development of a consumer friendly digital mental health gateway that optimises use of digital mental health services and technology;
- refocusing primary mental health care programmes and services to support a stepped care model;
- joined up support for child mental health, linking efforts in health, education and social support;

- a more equitable and integrated approach to youth mental health, led by PHNs, including to provide early intervention support to a broader group of young people with or at risk of severe mental illness;
- an integrated approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and social and emotional wellbeing services, led by PHNs to better plan and integrate services in their region;
- a new National Suicide Prevention Strategy, focusing in particular on evidence and community based suicide prevention activities to address local needs and better integration with state and territory activities;
- the introduction of innovative funding arrangements to support clinical care coordination for people with severe mental illness and complex needs who are managed in primary care; and
- strong Commonwealth leadership to support implementation of the mental health reforms and to facilitate system change and partnerships at all levels.

The Government appreciates the challenges of meeting the mental health needs of the Fleurieu Peninsula. The Country SA PHN is responsible for the Fleurieu Peninsula and will have access to a flexible pool of funding to allow them to address the needs of the community. Country SA PHN's contact details are PO Box 868, Nuriootpa SA 5355, phone (08) 8565 8900, and email admin@countryasaphn.com.au.

Improving the mental health system and outcomes for people with mental illness can only be done in partnership with consumers, carers, mental health stakeholders and state and territory governments. The Australian Government is committed to continued consultation and engagement as we move forward to implement these critical reforms.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely 

The Hon Sussan Ley MP

27 JAN 2016