

media monitoring

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Wake up to reality of mental illness

MANY of us working in front-line delivery of mental health services are encouraged that new Denison independent MHR Andrew Wilkie chose to take up the call for increased funding for mental health care during his maiden speech to the Federal Parliament.

At Richmond Fellowship, we provide residential, outreach and recreational programs across Tasmania and support more than 100 Tasmanians each week to improve their mental wellbeing.

However, at present funding levels, we are only partially meeting the needs of those people with most serious needs.

We cannot support those people whose needs are deemed less serious and we cannot run the badly needed preventive programs for younger Tasmanians, even though it is well-documented that earlier intervention leads to significantly increased outcomes for recovery and subsequently significant cost savings to the community.

Mental illness is already mainstream: one in five Australians will experience a mental illness at some stage in their lives and it will at some point affect 50 per cent of the population as they care for friends and family.

It's time government support caught up with reality and we thank Mr Wilkie for drawing attention to the issue.

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