



Kevin Humphries MP

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Healthy Lifestyles

Minister for Western NSW

MEDIA RELEASE

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Landmark Mental Health Reform Legislation passes Parliament

A Mental Health Commission designed to deliver international-best practice mental health care in NSW will be established following the passage of the Mental Health Commission Bill 2011 through Parliament today.

Minister for Mental Health, Kevin Humphries, said that through this landmark legislation the NSW Government will implement one of the most important mental health reforms in the State's history, delivering on a key election commitment.

"The NSW Government came into office with a powerful mandate from the community to reform the mental health system in NSW," Mr Humphries said.

"As the first Minister for Mental Health that NSW has ever had, it is incredibly humbling for me to deliver a reform the people of NSW have desperately needed for years.

"In developing our plan for reform we consulted more than 2000 people with mental illness, families, carers, clinicians, service providers, government agencies, the non-government sector and the general community.

"It was clear that there was an overwhelming desire for the creation of a body to be an independent, passionate and authoritative champion for mental health, and the Mental Health Commission will fulfil that role.

"The legislation delivers on the messages we have heard from communities across NSW, and the Mental Health Commission belongs to them."

Mr Humphries said the Mental Health Commission is expected to be operational by July this year.

"In establishing the Mental Health Commission the NSW Government has delivered on one of its most important election commitments," Mr Humphries said.

"The Commission will work hard to improve the State's mental health system and make a real difference to people whose lives have been touched by mental illness, and our communities as a whole.

"The Mental Health Commission will provide for a more accountable mental health system and work collaboratively with the government and non-government sectors, and the broader community, to ensure a coordinated and integrated approach to mental health care throughout NSW."

Minister for Health, Jillian Skinner, said the establishment of the Commission demonstrated the Government's commitment to serious and meaningful reform, and to improving services for the people of NSW.

"This is a time of great change for the health sector in NSW. We have been given an immense responsibility to address the health needs of people within NSW and the Mental Health Commission will ensure that this important reform is given the attention it deserves," Mrs Skinner said.

"Most importantly, however, it will improve services and outcomes for mental health patients, their families and carers across NSW."

Mr Humphries said this was particularly demonstrated by the inclusion of a Commissioner with first-hand experience of mental illness, meaning the Commission's work will be directly informed by personal experience of mental illness.