



Kevin Humphries MP
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Healthy Lifestyles
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MEDIA RELEASE

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**NSW TO HEAD PUSH TO EXTEND LIFE EXPECTANCY OF
PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS**

The NSW Government will continue to lead a national push to reverse the trend of people with serious mental illness dying on average 25 years earlier than the general population, Minister for Mental Health Kevin Humphries said today.

Mr Humphries said today's National Summit on Addressing the Premature Death of People with Mental Illness was a critical first step in developing a targeted and nationwide approach to reduce the rate of avoidable death from cardiovascular, respiratory and infectious diseases among people with a serious mental illness.

"Across Australia, a generation of people with a mental illness are living with the consequences of the failure of past and present governments to address the major disparities in health outcomes they face," Mr Humphries said.

"Most people are aware of the significant gap in life expectancy that exists between smokers and non-smokers, or between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, but few could tell you that people with severe mental illness live, on average, 25 years less than the general population.

"It is an unacceptable figure. Today was an important acknowledgement that we can no longer ignore the preventable toll of chronic disease, obesity and premature death among people with a serious mental illness.

Mr Humphries welcomed the summit's commitment to a new national approach to reverse the trend of people with a serious mental illness dying early and experiencing disproportionately adverse health outcomes.

"I will continue to work alongside my state and federal colleagues to ensure that this commitment remains firmly on the national agenda until we see an acceptable reduction in the adverse health outcomes and premature death of people with a serious mental illness," Mr Humphries said.