



Kevin Humphries MP

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Healthy Lifestyles

Minister for Western NSW

MEDIA RELEASE

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BONDI CLINICIAN LEADING GLOBAL PUSH TO EXTEND LIFE EXPECTANCY OF PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS

Minister for Mental Health Kevin Humphries has congratulated NSW clinician Dr Jackie Curtis for her role in spearheading an international push to improve the physical health of young people with psychosis.

Mr Humphries said Dr Curtis was one of an international group of clinicians that have launched a Royal College of Psychiatrists-endorsed campaign in Britain to reverse the trend of people with serious mental illness dying up to 25 years earlier than the general population.

“The Healthy Active Lives campaign aims to reverse the trend of people with mental illness dying significantly earlier than those who don’t, and encourage young people with psychosis to enjoy healthy and active lives as part of their recovery,” Mr Humphries said.

“The model adopted by the Healthy Active Lives campaign is based largely on the innovative work Dr Curtis has undertaken with the Bondi Early Psychosis Program.

“The program Dr Curtis has run at her clinic has greatly informed international thinking about how we address the physical impacts of mental illness and the rate of avoidable death from issues like cardiovascular, respiratory and infectious diseases.

“Considering the depth of Dr Curtis’ work with the Bondi Early Psychosis Program, it is fantastic to see she is now at the forefront of this drive to end the inexcusable rate of premature deaths among people with severe mental illness in Britain.”

The NSW Mental Health Commissioner John Feneley says poor physical health is not inevitable in young people with psychosis and this program is evidence of this.

“It is wonderful to see NSW clinicians leading the global development of these innovative methods and standards. These strategies will combat the discrimination and prejudice that often prevent young people who experience psychosis from leading healthy active lives.

“We look forward to working with specialist and primary healthcare professionals to integrate these methods into ongoing care of young people living with mental illness.”

Mr Humphries said the global push follows last month’s National Ministerial Summit on Addressing the Premature Death of People with Mental Illness, which fostered a national commitment to reverse the trend of people with a serious mental illness dying early and experiencing disproportionately adverse health outcomes.

“The summit was the first time in Australia there has been a national focus on addressing the high rates of adverse health outcomes and premature death amongst people with a mental illness,” Mr Humphries said.

“It was a critical first step in developing a targeted and nation-wide approach to reduce the rate of avoidable death from cardiovascular, respiratory and infectious diseases among people with a serious mental illness, and I will continue to work with my state and federal colleagues until we see an acceptable reduction in the adverse health outcomes and premature death of people with a serious mental illness.”