

Media release  
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## Leadership Needed on Mental Health

**SANE Australia today calls on the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition to announce their long-awaited mental health policies for the Federal Election.**

'Mental health issues touch every Australian family yet we've heard nothing so far from the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition on their plans for the future' says Jack Heath, CEO of SANE Australia. 'We need to hear from our next Prime Minister that mental health reform remains at the top of their political agenda. Both parties have, over the past decade, supported advances in mental health but of late there has been an alarming silence.'

SANE Australia welcomes the announcement of the Greens Party policy on mental health, which focuses on a better quality of service in rural as well as urban areas; measures to reduce stigma, and better support for carers.

'Australia undoubtedly has the capacity to lead the world in mental health but it requires political leadership and commitment to get us there,' says Heath. 'In some areas of mental health, Australia is already a world leader but there are so many areas in which we can do more and do better including recovery-based rehabilitation services and housing support.'

'We must ensure people get help early. Late help is expensive help. Reducing stigma, especially for those affected by schizophrenia and other psychotic illnesses, is vitally important to both improving lives and reducing costs,' says Heath. 'SANE Australia calls for the establishment of a comprehensive multi-year national stigma reduction program.'

SANE Australia also joins with others in the mental health sector and the community in calling on the Prime Minister and Leader of the Coalition to set a national vision for mental health.

'We have witnessed multi-party support for mental health in recent years, now is the time for our next Prime Minister to articulate a vision for Australia to lead the world in mental health within ten years,' says Jack Heath. 'A ten year vision to lead the world in mental health will provide a rallying call to all those involved in improving the lives of people affected by mental illness.'

**SANE Australia**  
A national charity working  
for a better life for people  
affected by mental illness.

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