

6 December 2015 | Embargoed until 6 December 12:30pm

Report from Ice Taskforce welcomed

Mental Health Australia has today welcomed the release of the Final Report of the National Ice Taskforce by the Prime Minister the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP.

"There are strong links between use of methamphetamine and mental illness," Mental Health Australia CEO Frank Quinlan said today.

"While the nature of these links is often complex, people who are prolonged and dependent users of this drug can and frequently do experience mental health issues.

"We must work to ensure closer integration between the mental health system and the alcohol and drug treatment systems. These problems frequently co-exist and we must ensure a service system that is built around the needs of individuals who require support.

"This report provides our community with a pathway towards addressing what is a significant social problem, with clear linkages to mental health and wellbeing."

In particular, Mental Health Australia has welcomed the recommendations:

- To review and enhance the Better Access Initiative to ensure that individuals with a diagnosed alcohol and other drug misuse disorder have greater access to appropriate treatment and referral pathways for alcohol and other drug-specific psychosocial intervention
- For the Commonwealth, state and territory governments to work in partnership to develop a national approach to strengthening the collaboration and intersection between the mental health and alcohol and other drug treatment sectors
- For governments to work with relevant accreditation associations and training organisations for various frontline workers to ensure that education and training relevant to ice and other psychostimulant use is included in the medical curricula and foundation qualifications and in continuing professional development programmes

"We now look forward to working with governments to implement these recommendations, especially in the context of the development of the 5th National Mental Health Plan," Mr Quinlan said.

Media Contact: Chris Wagner – 0434 378 939

