



THE HON MARK BUTLER MP

Minister for Mental Health and Ageing

Minister for Social Inclusion

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Mental Health Reform

SHARON GRIERSON MP

Federal Member for Newcastle

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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MORE DAY-TO-DAY SUPPORT FOR NOVOCASTRIANS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

People living with severe and persistent mental illness in Newcastle will receive greater day-to-day support to stay connected with their community through arts and crafts workshops, cooking lessons, shopping trips and other social outings.

More than \$971,000 will be provided by the Federal Government to Newcastle PRA (Psychiatric Rehabilitation Australia) on King Street to deliver structured personal and social support to more people living with a mental illness in the community.

From 1 January 2012, an extra \$19.3 million will be provided to community organisations across Australia to deliver the *Support for Day to Day Living in the Community* (D2DL) program.

Sharon Grierson MP, Federal Member for Newcastle, welcomed the funding boost, saying it would greatly assist locals to recover and stay well in the community.

"This funding will provide greater support for locals with severe mental illness, offering a friendly environment to help them face the challenges of reengaging in social activities, developing important life skills and building their confidence," Ms Grierson said.

Minister for Mental Health and Ageing and Minister for Social Inclusion, Mark Butler, said that Australians with severe mental illnesses continue to face significant challenges reconnecting to their community both during and after recovery.

"These Australians are often socially isolated, have low levels of support or are so affected by mental illness that they find it hard to function independently in the community," the Minister said.

"Meaningful activity and social connection are critical to people's recovery from mental illness and Day to Day Living is proven to work, already helping thousands of people to begin their recovery journey."

The additional \$19.3 million over five years for the program is part of the Federal Government's historic \$2.2 billion mental health package – the largest in Australian history.