Butterfly joins the urgent call for redesigned mental health services for eating disorders

Monday 26th March – Today, Butterfly Foundation will join with others who support those with a lived experience of mental illness, calling for a redesign of the Australian mental health system.

Supporting the needs of Australians with mental health issues is the key message of Australians for Mental Health which is being launched in Canberra today. Australians for Mental Health want every Australian to have the same access to mental healthcare, at the same standard that is available for people with physical health issues.

Butterfly Foundation, Australia’s national organisation for eating disorders, strongly supports this call for improvement in the health system, specifically for eating disorders.

Butterfly Foundation CEO, Christine Morgan says, “Australia needs to work closely with those with a lived experience of mental illness and their current health system to ensure that treatment for eating disorders is delivered as multi-disciplinary and consistent, regardless of postcode.”

“Unfortunately, this is not a new story. Time and time again Butterfly hears of families and individuals who are unable to navigate the Australian health system or access viable treatment, resulting in a sense of hopelessness and in some cases loss of life. Treatment should not be delivered or received in crisis or at acute levels of illness only, and clinicians and health care providers cannot be left untrained to treat an illness that affects 1 in 20 Australians, regardless of the medical environment they work in.”

Last year, Federal Minister for Health, Greg Hunt launched the National Agenda for Eating Disorders – committing to prioritising eating disorders and recognising there is a long road to walk in order to bring eating disorders treatment and support to a level playing field with other mental or physical illnesses. The Agenda provides a detailed platform for addressing the critical areas of health system reform and identifies the priorities needed to provide access to evidence-based multi-disciplinary treatment and dosages to any Australian with or at risk of an eating disorder.

In light of today’s Australians for Mental Health forum, Butterfly calls on each State and Territory to recognise the gaps in their health systems and commit to investing in closing these gaps, so that their communities can be confident in receiving treatment and care. Ms. Morgan says, “It’s timely that today we are coming together with those who have experienced this crisis in order to advocate for lasting change.”
Anyone needing support with eating disorders or body image issues is encouraged to contact Butterfly’s National Helpline 1800 ED HOPE on 1800 33 4673 or support@thebutterflyfoundation.org.au

For urgent support call Lifeline 13 11 14

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