



**NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH
CONSUMER & CARER FORUM**

Communiqué from National Mental Health Consumer Carer Register Workshop

***NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER AND CARER LEADERS CALL FOR
ACTION UNDER THE GOVERNMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS AGENDA***

Improving the human rights of people affected by mental illness must be addressed by all Australian governments and is a key priority issue for members of the National Register of Mental Health Consumers and Carers and the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum.

On 29/30 April 2010, 46 individuals representing mental health consumers and carers from across Australia agreed that discrimination and a failure to provide basic human rights is a major priority and election issue.

The representatives, who attended a workshop in Melbourne for the National Register of Mental Health Consumers and Carers, and the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum, called for the rights of people with mental illness to form a major component of the Australian Government's Human Rights Framework.

“Australians affected by mental illness experience discrimination on a daily basis. People with mental illness and their carers are often denied their fundamental human rights,” Tony Fowke, a spokesperson for the group, said.

“Discrimination begins with a lack of access to the types of health and community support services needed by mental health consumers to be treated equally in society. This is also evident in the way they are treated when they try to gain employment or insurance coverage, not to mention how people with mental illness are often referred to in the media.”

“We call on the Australian Government to ensure that funding allocated under its Human Rights Framework includes a major focus on the issues affecting people with mental illness”.

These leading mental health consumer and carer representatives strongly believe mental health issues should feature prominently in school and staff education programs, in community engagement and public awareness campaigns, and in participation strategies including policies and statements about human rights.

For further information, contact Mental Health Council of Australia:

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