



Speech by

**Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk**

**MEMBER FOR INALA**

Hansard Wednesday, 24 November 2010

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Community Mental Health Summit**

**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (10.20 am): On Wednesday, 8 December the Bligh government will hold Queensland's first ever community mental health summit in Brisbane. The summit, convened in partnership with the Queensland Alliance, will be the first of its type in Australia. The summit will have a particular focus on early intervention services for young people. It will give Queenslanders a chance to have their say on enhancing community mental health services.

This is a government that listens. I will be attending the summit along with the Parliamentary Secretary for Healthy Living, Murray Watt, and around 150 Queenslanders. I am pleased to announce today that Australian of the Year, Professor Patrick McGorry, will be the keynote speaker at the summit. Professor McGorry has an international reputation for his work as a researcher, clinician and advocate for mental health reform. People with a mental illness and their carers will also attend the summit, along with representatives from community mental health organisations and the state and Commonwealth governments.

We want to help more Queenslanders with a mental illness to live independently in the community. At the moment a lot of families do not know where to turn for support or where to go to access services. We need to ensure that families know help is available and where they can go to get it. We need to start talking about this important issue at home, in the workplace and in the community. We want to break down the barriers. We want people to get help early.

The summit will also help to inform our plan for the mental health community sector and assist in developing a Queensland position in relation to national mental health reforms. The 2010-11 state budget included \$28.6 million for community mental health programs including Australia's first Time Out Housing Initiative. This program targets people aged 18 to 25 experiencing early symptoms of mental illness. When I launched the first Time Out drop-in house in Cairns in August, I saw firsthand the difference it was making to young people's lives. It is more than just a house; it is a home that provides a safe and supportive environment to young Queenslanders. It gives young people around-the-clock support and access to clinical and specialist public mental health services as well as counselling. It helps people receive that essential help before they have to go to hospital.

We want to know what else is working well in the community. We want to support more people with a mental illness early rather than once they are in hospital. Next month's summit is a step in this direction. It is a step to break down barriers. It is a step to start talking. It is a step for us to listen.