



Speech By  
**Leanne Linard**


**MEMBER FOR NUDGE**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Mental Health

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (6.45 pm): This week is Queensland Mental Health Week and Tuesday was World Mental Health Day. During this week hundreds of events are held across Queensland in a statewide display of solidarity. It is an opportunity to acknowledge the importance of mental health and wellbeing, to reduce stigma and to celebrate those who work in the mental health field. I rise to speak about this issue to do my small part to give a voice to an issue that has a deep and profound effect on our community. Globally, the World Health Organization estimates that more than 300 million people suffer from depression, the leading cause of disability. More than 260 million are living with anxiety disorders. Many of these people live with both. The effect of mental illness can be severe on the individuals and families concerned, and its influence far reaching. Those with mental illness often experience isolation and stigma and a strong nexus exists with social problems such as poverty, unemployment and homelessness.

With this nexus in mind, it is of great concern to me that we see conservative ideologues in the federal parliament continually spinning a policy narrative with regard to social welfare which feeds an undercurrent of discrimination and further entrenches disadvantage in this country. An estimated 45 per cent of Australians aged 16 to 85 will experience a common mental health disorder such as depression, anxiety or a substance use disorder in their lifetime. One in seven young Australians experience a mental health condition—that is, children and adolescents from as young as four to 17 years of age. With suicide the biggest killer of young Australians, surely there can be no response but to invest in vital services to stop such a senseless loss of life and potential.

Mental health and suicide prevention are key priorities for this Labor state government. We have allocated nearly \$140 million in capital infrastructure for mental health—the biggest capital investment in a decade. We are delivering a new extended treatment facility for young people—the replacement to the Barrett Adolescent Centre that the LNP refused to deliver. We have rolled out more intensive community based treatment teams for youth. We are also committed to the construction of new mental health step-up, step-down facilities, including in my electorate in Nundah. We have completed a total rewrite of mental health legislation—the first in around 15 years—with the passage of the Mental Health Act 2016.

This investment stands in stark contrast to the priority placed on mental health services in this state by the former LNP government. Reporting for the Productivity Commission shows that expenditure on mental health services fell by \$45.4 million in 2012-13 in Tim Nicholls's first full year as treasurer. This was the single largest cut to mental health expenditure ever recorded by any state or territory government in nominal terms. In 2013-14 Queensland's spending on mental health fell to the lowest in Australia on a per capita basis. Queenslanders living with mental illness deserve a government that will invest in the services that will support and invest in them. Tonight I want to pay tribute to all of those who work in this field and those who are researching to further this field, but most importantly I want to pay tribute to those who live with mental illness.