



**THE HON PETER DUTTON MP  
MINISTER FOR HEALTH  
MINISTER FOR SPORT**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**HELPING TO CHANGE PERCEPTIONS OF SUICIDE AND MENTAL ILLNESS**

Media reporting and commenting on suicide and mental illness will be assisted by an improved national guide launched today.

*Reporting suicide and mental illness: A Mindframe resource for media professionals* is the result of two years of consultation between the media and the mental health and suicide prevention sectors.

Mindframe, funded by the Department of Health, is the national authority on the portrayal of suicide and mental illness in the media, providing education and training for both media and the mental health and suicide prevention sectors.

Key changes to the guide include shorter, clearer advice to support journalists to understand the risks involved when reporting on suicide and mental illness; and new, helpful ways to minimise these risks.

There is clearer guidance on language to avoid stigmatising people living with or developing a mental illness and advice to the media who may be at risk themselves.

There are also new guidelines for the online environment.

Welcoming the new guide today, the Minister for Health, Peter Dutton, said it was a practical resource, building on existing codes of practice and editorial policies.

“This is not about imposing rules per se on the media for reporting and communicating on this most sensitive of issues,” Mr Dutton said.

“The media helps shape and reinforce social attitudes towards, and perceptions of, suicide and mental illness – and this resource will support them in that important role.”

Also released today were updated quick reference cards with facts and statistics and contacts for organisations which can provide comments and also assist members of the public needing support.

The Mindframe collaborative model is recognised internationally as best-practice. Australian research shows that the quantity and quality of reporting about mental illness and suicide has risen since it was introduced.

Mr Dutton said the Australian Government was committed to improving the lives of Australians with a mental illness and their families.

“We have committed \$18 million to establish the country’s first National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health, and another \$5 million to the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre to establish a comprehensive new e-mental health platform for young Australians,” Mr Dutton said.

**For more information contact the Minister’s office on 02 6277 7220**

