



MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday June 3, 2010

INVESTING IN MENTAL HEALTH

A “whole of community” strategy will be the only effective response to providing adequate mental health services for Tasmania into the future, Anglicare CEO, Chris Jones, said today.

Dr Jones was speaking at the opening of a conference *Investing in Tasmania’s Mental Health* being held in Launceston June 3 and 4. It is open to everyone interested in Tasmania’s mental health – including consumers, carers, mental health services providers, community service providers, government services, local government, State and Federal government, funding bodies and policy makers.

The conference, organised by Anglicare and the Mental Health Council of Tasmania, is examining the best ways to invest in mental health, given that one in five Tasmanians will experience mental illness during their lifetime.

“This is a big problem and the Tasmanian community needs to be proactive and integrated in its response,” said Dr Jones.

“Of course there will be agencies and organisations with particular responsibilities which need to invest in additional resources and workplace development,” he said. “But everyone can play a part in taking away stigma, encouraging prevention and early intervention, and providing safe and easier ways for people to access support”.

Anglicare provides a range of services to support people with mental illness, as well as their family and friends. In the past year it has supported 240 people with mental health issues, and more than 200 families.

“We know through our research that there are a lot of people with multiple issues – not only are they dealing with mental illness, but they are experiencing homelessness, poverty and barriers to employment,” said Dr Jones.

Anglicare also recognises the important role that people with mental illness and their families can play in shaping service delivery and strategic planning.

“This conference is celebrating the tremendous achievements that have been made in this area in recent times – including service innovation and better outcomes for people,” Dr Jones said. “But we are also serious about identifying gaps and ensuring that we take on board any national and international developments that could prove helpful for Tasmania”.



For interview contact Dr Chris Jones on 0419 585 247
Or Michelle Swallow (Mental Health Council) on 0407 600 811