



Matt Kean

Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation

Tanya Davies

Minister for Mental Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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WORKPLACE THE FOCUS OF NEW MENTAL HEALTH PLAN

The serious impact of mental health issues in the workplace will be addressed in a new strategy, being launched today in front of businesses, academics and non-government organisations (NGOs).

Minister for Better Regulation Matt Kean will host the briefing, which will focus on the thousands of NSW workers affected by mental illness each day.

“At any given time, one in six working-age people suffer from a mental illness, the equivalent of more than 800,000 people in NSW,” Mr Kean said.

“People will spend up to one third of their lives at work, which means the workplace is a huge opportunity to help support individual’s mental health.”

With mental health-related absenteeism estimated to cost the NSW economy \$1.5 billion annually, Mr Kean said addressing this challenge was also critical to improving the state’s productivity.

“Without proper workplace support networks in place, mental health illness can cause greater absenteeism, increased compensation claims, and higher worker turnover,” he said.

“Government bodies and organisations, including the Mental Health Commission of NSW, WayAhead and NSW Health, are already spear-heading some great mental health initiatives across NSW.

“We want to tap into their knowledge and work together to develop a plan that will for the first time attempt to find solutions to the challenge of mental health in the workplace, and better support NSW businesses to effectively manage it.”

Minister for Mental Health Tanya Davies said today’s industry gathering will be an important opportunity to hear from those directly affected by mental health in the workplace.

“This is about putting people, not process, at the centre of the mental health care system, and is a decade-long whole-of-government enhancement of the services we provide in NSW,” she said.

“We know mental illness does not discriminate, and can touch the lives of people anywhere, including the workplace, which is why a key reform focus is to strengthen prevention and early intervention supports.”

Today’s briefing was part of SafeWork NSW’s *Work Health and Safety Roadmap for NSW*

2022, a six-year plan that aims to reduce work-related serious injuries and illnesses, including mental illness by 30 per cent.

For more information on the [Work Health and Safety Roadmap for NSW 2022](#) or resources on [mental health in the workplace](#) visit the [SafeWork NSW](#) website or call 13 10 50.

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