



John Barilaro
Deputy Premier
Minister for Regional NSW
Tanya Davies
Minister for Mental Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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CRICKET TOUR PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON RURAL MENTAL HEALTH

Cricket legends, new and old, will team up with one of NSW's leading rural mental health programs, to raise awareness about mental health in drought stricken communities across the State.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW John Barilaro and Minister for Mental Health Tanya Davies today announced the NSW Government will invest \$120,000 and partner with cricket alumni group 'Baggy Blues' for their 2018-19 cricket tour.

"Cricket brings us together. These games will not only be great entertainment but an important avenue for our rural mental health teams to deliver life-saving messages," Mr Barilaro said.

"We are in the grip of the worst drought this State has seen in decades and the NSW Government will keep supporting affected communities," he said.

The 2018-19 'Baggy Blues Tour' will visit Lismore next month, Dubbo in November, Griffith in December, and Bega in February next year.

Mrs Davies said the "Baggy Blues" have begun working with the Centre for Rural Remote Mental Health (CRRMH) to deliver a mental health workshop, cricket clinics for budding sports stars and a celebrity cricket match for each town on the tour map.

"This is a timely opportunity for our Rural Adversity Mental Health Program team from CRRMH to reach members of the community who will flock to the popular Baggy Blues events," Mrs Davies said.

"The passion and drive these sportsmen and women have to make a real difference to the mental health of people in our rural areas really is admirable," she said.

Earlier this month the NSW Government committed \$6.3 million over two years to boost support for rural mental health. Part of the funding will provide 20 new 'farm gate' counsellors and frontline mental health workers.

"We want people to check in with themselves, and those around them. If you notice changes in behaviour - reach out and encourage that person to take the first step and see their GP."

If you, or someone you know, needs crisis support phone Lifeline on 13 11 14. For local mental health services call 1800 011 511. To find out more about the Baggy Blues Tour contact your local NSW Cricket Association or visit www.ramhp.com.au.

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**Vision and photos available for download here: <https://bit.ly/2OUH3gF>*