

7 October 2017

## Colourful events send serious message

### **A record of over 200 community mental health and wellbeing events are scheduled across the State for Queensland Mental Health Week (8-14 October).**

Events ranging from tea parties and sausage sizzles, to wellbeing workshops and art exhibitions will be held from Goondiwindi to the Gold Coast, north to Atherton and out west to Mount Isa.

Cities and towns are also showing their true colours for Queensland Mental Health Week. Key Brisbane landmarks including the Story Bridge will light up purple and yellow on World Mental Health Day (10 October).

Queensland Mental Health Commissioner Ivan Frkovic said a variety of colourful community events were planned, but there was also a serious prevention message behind the celebrations.

"We need to value our mental health and actively manage our wellbeing, as individuals and as communities, to prevent poor mental health becoming mental illness.

"Around half of all Queenslanders will experience some form of mental illness during their lifetime, and many more will see friends or family members affected.

"People often think about mental illness only in terms of acute illnesses, which don't apply to them.

"What they don't realise is the most common illnesses are depression, anxiety and substance misuse. Anyone can experience poor mental health or illness of this nature."

Mr Frkovic urged Queenslanders to pause and reflect on their mental health and wellbeing this coming week, and what they can do to more actively manage it.

"There's longstanding research that points out the simple things in life are the most beneficial to our wellbeing.

"Spend some time to connect in a meaningful way with loved ones and others around you, or do something worthwhile for your community that strengthens everyone's wellbeing.

"Get out in the sunshine, do some gardening, walk the dog, or just take time to slow down and appreciate your surroundings. Eat well, and look after your physical, as well as your mental health," he said.

Mr Frkovic said mental health week also served to create understanding of mental illness, its signs and where to find help.

He said talking and learning about mental illness also breaks down stereotypes and inaccurate perceptions, and celebrates the lives of people living with mental illness.

"Everyone has a role to play in preventing and reducing the impact of mental illness, problematic substance use and suicide."

The full list of Queensland Mental Health Week events is at [www.qldmentalhealthweek.org.au](http://www.qldmentalhealthweek.org.au)

