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**MEDIA STATEMENT**

## **Let's Talk about depression**

The Mental Health Commission is getting behind World Health Organisation (WHO) Day on Friday 7 April to encourage Western Australians to talk about depression and break down the barriers for people seeking help.

The theme of the WHO day campaign is Depression: Let's Talk and is aimed at normalising the conversation around depression so more people feel comfortable asking for help in preventing and treating the medical condition.

Videos that promote the importance of talking about depression will be released on the Mental Health Commission website and through social media channels.

Western Australian Mental Health Commissioner Timothy Marney said the 'Let's Talk' message was important to remind people that depression is something that must not be ignored.

"Depression is a serious condition that left untreated can be extremely debilitating for people and can have a major effect on their life and relationships," Mr Marney said.

"Nearly 50 per cent of people with depression don't get treatment<sup>1</sup> so we are advocating for more people to talk about mental health to reduce the barriers that prevent people from seeking help.

"You can start the conversation with friends, family and colleagues, and share a photo on social media using #LetsTalk to spread the message."

General Practitioner Dr Hilary Fine said people with depression should actively seek help from medical professionals to assist in their recovery.

"People are comfortable seeing their GP for medical conditions such as diabetes and heart disease but may feel uncomfortable seeking treatment for mental health conditions," Dr Fine said.

"People can and do recover from depression, and your GP is often the best place to start to get advice on what is the most suitable treatment for you."

World Health Day is celebrated on 7 April every year to mark the founding of the World Health Organisation (WHO). It provides a unique opportunity to mobilise action of a particular health topic that concerns people all around the world.

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<sup>1</sup> The World Health Organisation stated even in high-income countries, nearly 50% of people with depression do not get treatment

<http://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day/2017/toolkit.pdf?ua=1>

To take part in World Health Organisation Day visit [www.mhc.wa.gov.au](http://www.mhc.wa.gov.au) to find more information and see how you can participate.

**Conversation starters:**

- Did you see that story/documentary/article in the news? depression is really common...
- So many people I know are struggling with mental health, did you know depression affects 7.8% of people?
- You don't seem your usual self lately. Are you going OK?
- I haven't been my usual self lately. I've been dealing with depression but I'm seeing my GP and it's getting better.

You can find further information about having the conversation on [beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)

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