

Press Release
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For Immediate Release

National Depression Initiative to Engage with GPs at New Mental Health Guidelines Launch

Today the Ministry of Health will launch new Mental Health Guidelines for GPs at the Annual Scientific Conference held by The Royal New Zealand College of General practitioners.

The guidelines provide best practice for the identification and treatment of depression to GPs and other primary health care clinicians and have been developed in response to the fact that over one third of adults seeing a primary care professional are likely to have a mental health problem.

National Depression Initiative (NDI) is a national public health campaign launched by the Ministry of Health in 2006 to reduce the impact of depression on the lives of New Zealanders. During the Conference the NDI will begin a process of engagement with GPs and clinicians to raise their awareness about the resources provided by the initiative, coinciding with the launch of the new guidelines for GPs.

This engagement will help provide valuable feedback from primary health care which will be fed into the ongoing NDI strategy development.

NDI spokesperson Candace Bagnall says, "The NDI is currently working to bridge the gap between clinical treatment for depression and depression support services such as the Depression Helpline and the NDI and Lowdown websites. By creating a triage between primary health care and these services the NDI aims to enable the alignment of clinical treatment and self management tools."

Following the successful launch of the Lowdown.co.nz website, which helps young New Zealanders understand, manage and recover from depression, the NDI website targeted at adults will be re-launched later this year. The new website will be an engaging, interactive destination for people to access information on depression, put them in contact with relevant help services and arm them with self-help strategies and solutions to improve lives affected by depression.

By making GPs and primary health care clinicians aware of depression support services available the NDI aims to develop effective and cohesive support and treatment for people experiencing depression.

ENDS

Sent on behalf of the Ministry of Health – National Depression Initiative

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