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## MENTAL ILLNESS MYTHS EXPLOITED

“Psychiatrist Adrian Keller, the Clinical Director of the new Forensic Hospital does a grave mischief when he feeds the public fear of the mentally ill to obtain funding and justify his coercive regime. See his statement July 13 Sydney Morning Herald <http://tinyurl.com/6z73jb9>” said Justice Action Coordinator Brett Collins.

“As the top man in charge, his comments of ‘risky’ patients, ‘foolish and naïve’ not to use force and ‘it could get ugly’ are deeply threatening, show his attitude but are entirely contrary to the facts. People with a serious mental illnesses are fourteen times more likely to be the *victim* of a violent crime rather than the perpetrator. Ninety-five percent of homicides are committed by people who have never been diagnosed with a mental health problem. <http://tinyurl.com/5tmd8u>” said Mr Collins.

“He criticised the proposed \$1.5 billion budget injection into new community based initiatives saying it was of no use to help the severe and persistently mentally ill, as local Medicare professionals are ill equipped to deal with those ‘complex and risky’ people. In fact community and social support with experienced consumer workers is the best response for those people” said Mr Collins.

His call for more funding to go to his new \$135m hospital area is outrageous. Already \$205,000 is spent on each patient each year – entirely wasted when mental health consumers and the community are not involved in the healing process. Every patient is medicated, forcibly if not voluntarily, as well as being held behind high walls inside concrete cellblocks subject to arbitrary treatment. The Tribunal supposedly controlling him is subservient in practice unable even to hold the public hearings as required by law. He is unaccountable to either the public or the patients, prohibiting visitors who haven’t “physically touched” the patient, and all under his obligation to “care” which he defines. His regime is currently fighting tooth and nail in the Supreme Court to prevent enrolled patients receiving electoral information” said Mr Collins.

“At least his call for housing and employment support was right. But not in his hospital we would hope” said Mr Collins.

For comments: 0438 705003