

# N N A A M I

The National Network of Adult and  
Adolescent Children who have a  
Mentally ill parent/s. Inc .

Ms Nicola Roxon,  
Minister For Health  
ACT 2600  
Fax (02) 6273 4100      3 January 2008

**These Families are WORKING Harder than Most in Australia.  
Congratulations on your new position as Health Minister. For Ms Roxon's Personal Attention**

Dear Ms Roxon,

NNAAMI is alarmed at the story of Rape and Murder of a young person following an involuntary admission of a mentally ill father in a Queensland Mental Health Facility, widely reported in 'The Age' entitled, 'Libs want inquiry into QLD child's death' January 2, 2008 ABC TV, the Courier Mail, and Brisbane Times January 3, 2008. Targeted Mental Illness Prevention services are desperately required.

NNAAMI notes that people with mental illness are often discharged from inpatient units and other mental health services in Australia, without relevant or appropriate consultation with families or their children. This is a deplorable situation. Children and Families support parents with mental illness 24/7 and therefore often have intimate and valuable knowledge of a parent's condition.

We know you would want to do the best to assist these families. We believe It is vitally important that the federal government

- Ensure each mental health service in Australia has in place a uniform procedure of,
1. **Documented Treatment Plans and Discharge Plans** for all mental health patients., inc copies to families.
  2. That **Treatment and Discharge Plans** include consultation with a patient's children / family members and these plans include documentation of all family views on these Plans and include where possible families as signatories to these plans, ( reviewed on a regular basis with a nationally monitored dispute resolution procedure).  
Parents and others Have a Voice so should children.
  3. Ensure that there is an **independent Advocacy and support service** for this vulnerable group of children (in Australia, managed by and for the affected group), federally funded in the mental health area via an NGO service such as NNAAMI who is fully representative of this group, (federal government must ensure, a fair go for this vulnerable and isolated group of children NNAAMI represents.
  4. Guarantee there is a formal procedure is in place across Australia in mental health services, for **Priority to be given to treat, and or extend the stay for parents** in adult in-patient mental health services, where concerns are raised by children or families of the risk to children from a parent with mental illness. With referral of young people to NNAAMI service or for support.

It is vitally important that these vulnerable children and young people have their own NNAAMI web based, tailored support and mental illness prevention service federally funded.

Federal Government can do a lot to alleviate the suffering and burden these children endure.

*" We are the children breaking the silence "*

**Internet site :** <http://www.vicnet.net.au/~nnaami/>

NNAAMI is well placed to reach the most isolated of this group of vulnerable young people

Most kids are not at risk of being Murdered.  
They are at highest risk of developing health problems,  
Stress,  
emotional difficulties,  
psychological difficulties,  
having a heart attack,  
depression,  
poverty  
(just to name a few),  
and to top it all off they are at highest risk of suicide,

We believe this is because they have not ever had a service of their own funded,  
and that They have not been taken seriously.

The needs of this group is separate to others carers.

We don't just need more child protection workers or welfare programs or more of the same. A more cost effective and responsible measure is PREVENTION. We need PREVENTION a (NNAAMI) support organization in the Mental Health area funded for one of the biggest (and most neglected) family support networks CHILDREN.

We believe all of the above measures delivered together will go a long way to addressing the difficulties these children and families face.

Further information regarding the needs of this group can be found on our website [www.nnaami.org](http://www.nnaami.org)  
I can be contacted on 0407 857465.

*What Existing Federal Funding Program is Available that will Fund NNAAMI support ?*

*What Federal funding can be made available to deliver NNAAMI programs ?*

*What Parts of our Youth Link proposal can you fund ?*

*What support will the Federal Government provide NNAAMI to become funded and further this vital service ?*

We know you can help us.  
We look forward to your prompt reply.

Yours Sincerely, Happy New Year

Paul Mckillop

Convenor

NNAAMI ( P.S. Please note as yet we have not received a reply from you to our letter to you of 23 August 07.  
Please also find enclosed copy of letter 21 December 07 for which we also seek a reply)

**Most Kids don't just talk to anyone.... why would they**

**“ I have been looking for you all my life  
You know where I've been  
You know what its like  
You know what I'm going through ”**

**NNAAMI member 12yr old**

**Prevention is better than cure**