



Mental Health Foundation
Delivering Better Mental Health For All



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Communities@Work

**For Immediate Release:
Monday 8th November 2008**

KATE LUNDY TO LAUNCH MARK'S PLACE: A SANCTUARY FOR PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS AND THEIR CARERS

On Tuesday, 9th December 2008, Senator Katy Lundy will launch Mark's Place, a unique respite home for people with a mental illness and their Carers, run by the Mental Health Foundation. Louise Maher from ABC 666 Canberra will also attend to support the event in the role of Master of Ceremonies.

Set in a peaceful part of Narrabundah, the home provides a place to 'get away' for people with mental illness and/or their supporting family members. The unique model caters to families individually, providing the support that meets each family's unique needs. Mark's place can accommodate the Carer, the person with a mental illness or both, depending on what will best support their situation. Staff members work one-on-one with each guest to ensure they get the most out of their time at Mark's place. This may include support with improving daily living skills. Mark's Place also creates a feeling of connectedness, helping many Carers and care recipients to realise that they are not alone.

Mary Gays, CEO, Mental Health Foundation said, "For many, it can be a daily struggle caring for loved ones with long term mental illness. Monitoring medication levels, tending to many day-to-day domestic needs, as well as emotionally supporting someone, can all become tiring and certainly builds up. Mark's place is about giving Carers a break from that stress."

Contributing to the success of Mark's Place, Carers ACT and Respite Options ACT (coordinated by Communities@Work) work collaboratively with Mark's Place in their programs, which aim to provide flexible and tailored respite to people caring for family members with mental illness.

Carers ACT's Mental Health Carers Respite Program can develop respite options, both crisis and planned, that are tailored to the needs of each family. Some of these respite services include Mark's Place and Communities@Work, however, all options are explored to provide the best respite solution for each Carer, care recipient and family members.

Respite Options ACT provides respite and support services to carers of people with a mental illness. Care recipients are offered a variety of social interactions to enhance their quality of life. The program also encourages independence by supporting individuals in daily living activities.

Funding for Mark's Place, Respite Options ACT and The Mental Health Carers Respite Program is provided by the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. Collaboration is key to the achievements of all three services.

For more information and interviews, contact Mary Gays on 0410 036 671

**Photo and interview opportunities:
From 10.00am Tuesday, 9th December 2008
Mark's Place, 1 Looranah Street, Narrabundah**

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