



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

Inquiry into mental health barriers to education & training

*Chair: Ms Amanda Rishworth MP
Deputy Chair: Mr Rowan Ramsey MP*

New inquiry into mental health barriers to education, training and employment participation

The federal government has asked the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Employment to investigate how to assist Australians with mental ill health, overcome barriers to their education, training and employment participation.

The Committee's inquiry will also focus on:

- improving access to education, training and employment services through greater collaboration between government and health, community, education, training and employment service providers; and
- strategies to improve the capacity of individuals, families, community members, co-workers and employers to respond to the needs of people with mental ill health.

"The momentum of last year's focus on mental health issues must be maintained," Committee Chair Amanda Rishworth said.

"This inquiry affords the Committee a unique opportunity to inform the Government's ongoing commitment to mental health care reform and maximising employment participation.

"A range of services and support already exist for students, job seekers and employees with mental illnesses. A key focus of our inquiry will be to examine how we can continue to enhance these in order to improve people's participation in education, training and employment," Ms Rishworth said.

This inquiry has been requested by the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations, Senator Christopher Evans.

There will be a media conference announcing the new inquiry today (Thursday 3 March) at **1.15pm** in **Committee Room 2R2, Parliament House, Canberra**, which will be broadcast internally on HMS 16 and also webcast live on: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

Submissions for the inquiry close on Friday 29 April 2011.

For media comment: contact the Committee Chair, Ms Amanda Rishworth MP on (02) 6277 2293 or (08) 8186 2588.

For information on the inquiry: contact the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4578 email ee.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ee>