



26.4.05

Committee Secretary
Senate Select Committee on Mental Health
Canberra.

Dear Sir,

Government authorisation
for this committee is very welcome.
I note that since 1993 the government
has increased funding for mental ^{health}.
This money should be spent in the
best possible way, and if found necessary
maybe a little more should be allotted.

The recent decision to
raise the cut-off point for relief from
pharmaceutical bills will cause
hardship to some people.

Provision of more public
housing both for mentally ill people
and low income folk generally
should be a priority. In the
area of Gippstand where I live

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many people have great difficulty finding low cost accommodation.

Much needs to be done re education about mental illness - for instance, police who have to deal with crisis situations need more insight into the way psychotic illness may cause sufferers to behave, especially if they have ceased taking their medical medication. As demonstrated by the Bernicia Rau case an Australia wide data base of missing persons would be of great value. There is great need for more community centres, and more effective after hours crisis services

It is good that the Government has set up this committee on mental health, which hopefully will lead to better outcomes for patients and their families

yours faithfully
J. Thomas