

## Mental health nursing: it really *is* Rocket Science

- Kim Ryan
- Chief Executive Officer
- Australian College of Mental Health Nurses



### **Mental health is a huge problem**

WEF \$6,000,000,000,000 a year by 2030

NMHC 40 Billion a year in Australia

OECD4% GDP

## The reciprocal relationship between physical & mental health

- Poor mental health = greater risk of physical illness
- Poor physical health = greater risk of mental health problems
- The combined effect
  - Occupational disability
  - Increased functional disability
  - Poor quality of life
  - Longer LOS in hospital
  - Poorer treatment adherence
  - Poorer prognosis
  - Accelerated mortality



## Cancer and Mental Health



- There is an association between cancer, depression and anxiety
- Mortality rates are higher in cancer patients who are depressed and even higher in those with diagnosed depression
- Cancer survivors have higher suicide rates than the general population
- Adults with cancer and cancer survivors commonly develop PTSD, anxiety and depression related to the disease & treatment



## Nursing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- Research, technology, rapid change
- Nursing practice increasingly complex and demanding
- Impacts on nursing practice & the health care system
- Result is specialisation & compartmentalisation



## Specialisation

- Specialisation is a practical solution to complexity
- Specialisation should not equal compartmentalisation
- Patients want good nursing care

## Nursing someone with a mental health problem is the same as nursing someone without one

- Listen
- Ask how they feel
- Validate their feelings
- Treat them like a

person

It would be great if someone had asked

- "How do you feel emotionally out of 10?" the way they ask about physical pain."

Judy, age 52, breast cancer survivor of 10 years



## Holistic nursing



## The Australian Health Care System:

- Is privileged
- Is under mounting pressure
- Increases in demand and expenditure
- Unacceptable inequalities in health outcomes
- Poor access for some people
- Safety and quality issues
- Major workforce shortages & an ageing nursing workforce





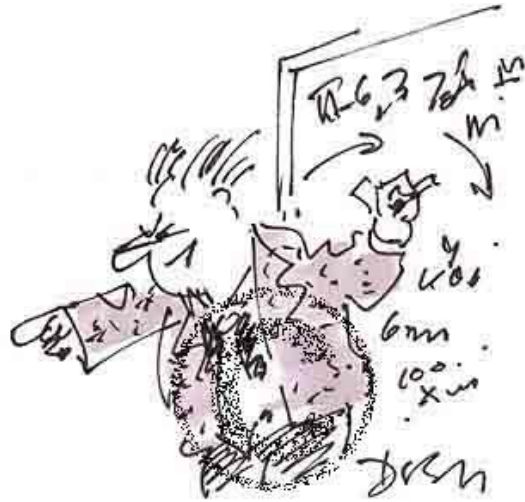
Just a nurse !!

So why ISN'T mental health firmly embedded in  
the general nursing agenda?



Your role NOW is so important...





"That's where you're wrong!  
It is rocket science."



## Collaborate with Peer Workforce







## Collaborate with general nurses



## All hands on deck!





**KEEP  
CALM**  
and be a  
**CHANGE  
MAKER**