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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# **Professor Allan Fels Launches New Mental Illness Fact Sheets**

The Mental Illness Fellowship Victoria with the support of former ACCC Chairman Professor Allan Fels, has launched a new range of Fact Sheets aimed to educate, demystify and support people with mental illness, their family and friends.

“Australians deserve the highest quality information,” said Professor Fels. “When my family was first touched by mental illness we wanted reliable information as quickly as possible. These Fact Sheets are exactly what we needed.”

Written by the Specialist Family Support Program of the Mental Illness Fellowship, the Fact Sheets represent the most up-to-date and comprehensive information available on mental illness covering conditions including:

- bi-polar disorder,
- schizophrenia,
- psychosis,
- depression,
- borderline personality disorder
- anxiety.

The Fact Sheets offer advice on identifying symptoms, treatment options and helpful interventions when dealing with people with mental illness. They also explore issues such as links between cannabis and psychosis, family support, suicide and violence.

“One in five people have mental illness. Five in five can help,” said Professor Fels, now Dean of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government. “Information is a key weapon in the battle against both mental illness and the stigma that surrounds it.”

The Fact Sheets are available via the Mental Illness Fellowship’s website [www.mifellowship.org](http://www.mifellowship.org) or the MI Fellowship Resource Centre 9482 4199.

*Background: The Mental Illness Fellowship Victoria started in 1978, has an income budget of \$7 million and has over 500 volunteers working with our 170 staff. It provides 35 programs across Victoria, in areas such as rehabilitation, respite, employment and accommodation. In 2003 MI Fellowship’s employment program was a joint winner of the Prime Minister’s Employer of the Year Award and the National Achievement award at the International Mental Health Service Awards.*