

21/1/2020

Dear Commissioners,

I would like to make it known that I am opposed to recommendations made in The Draft Report – specifically on page 11 where it is mentioned *“The existing physical development checks of Australia’s 1.25 million 0 to 3 year olds in community health services can be expanded to incorporate social and emotional wellbeing aspects of development, so that any necessary assistance can be provided to both the child and parents/carers.”* I am fine with **physical development** checks that can be proven with physical tests and x-rays, blood tests etc. But when you incorporate “social and emotional well being checks on 0-3 year olds” so you can monitor their future mental illness and then possibly prescribe anti-depressants and other powerful psychiatric medication.

I have to oppose this proposal as any screening would be totally subjective on someone’s interpretation of whether this child may have a future mental illness based on what? If a child is crying? hungry? upset, teething, hot, cold, upset for his teddy. There are endless reasons for this and the parents can work with their doctor to resolve this through love and caring and nutrition and other holistic methods rather than prescribing medication at such an early age.

As a father of 2 children and hoping to be a grandfather in the future it troubles me greatly at the thought of any screening for mental illness of any child let alone a child from 0 to 3 years old.

Regards

Andrew Fairlie