

Subject: Asylum Seeker Death Brisbane

20 March 2015

Why was there no reporting of the tragic death in Brisbane of a young man who came by boat, full of hope for a life without persecution, who became mentally ill during four long years of waiting for a visa which would allow him to work, to be independent and get on with his life. A plumber by trade, he often said he would do anything, go anywhere to work.

Omid died a fortnight ago, a 29 year old victim of the insidious depression and loss of self esteem which comes with wasted and debilitating years in immigration detention and on a Bridging Visa without the right to work. That is the impact of inhumane bipartisan policies. Thankfully, kind Australians befriended and helped this vulnerable man as he unravelled.

It was far too late when on 24 February the Minister granted him the ironically named "Humanitarian Stay(Temporary)" visa with work rights , for one year only. Refugees need a durable solution.

Unless Minister Dutton accelerates the process of giving asylum seekers and refugees their human right to work, I fear there will be more premature deaths of broken men and women who came for protection but found torment and persecution. Nationally, there are an estimated 20 000 Omid's out there , waiting for the right to work and pay taxes.

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