Media Release

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Australian mental health champion among BBC’s 100 inspirational woman

*beyondblue* CEO Georgie Harman congratulates young Ella Ingram on being named among the BBC’s 100 most inspirational women in 2015.

Ella Ingram, a 21-year-old Melbourne woman, made headlines in October when she challenged insurance giant QBE over its decision to reject her travel insurance claim when she was hospitalised with depression at the age of 17 and couldn’t go on a school trip to New York for which she had already paid.

Her case, presented by Victoria Legal Aid, was an Australian first and seen as a test of the lawfulness of insurance discrimination on the grounds of mental illness.

*beyondblue* and Mental Health Australia have repeatedly appealed to the insurance industry to change their practices towards people with mental health conditions who are denied coverage or charged higher premiums for travel, salary and life insurance policies.

The BBC’s 100 Women season showcases inspirational stories from around the world of women who defy stereotypes.

Other names on this year’s list include Academy award-winning, Hollywood actors Hilary Swank, for her advocacy of transgender rights, and Patricia Arquette, for her Oscar acceptance speech on gender pay equity.

There are sporting champions such as tennis star Sania Mirza, one of the highest-paid athletes in India, who is constantly asked when she is going to have children. Others show extraordinary courage in speaking out against injustice, such as Afghani rapper Sonita Alizadeh who used music to campaign against child marriage when her family sold her to raise money to buy a bride for her brother.

Ella’s case against QBE was heard in the human rights division of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) in October and a decision is expected to be handed down in December.

To request an interview with or image of Ella Ingram, please contact Carmel Egan on (03) 9810 6187 or 0476 803 991.