

The Hon Tony Abbott MP

Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia
Australian Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

23 March 2015

Dear Prime Minister

We, the undersigned, are writing to implore the Australian Government to take urgent action to ensure continuity of services and programs for Australians who live with mental illness, and those who care for them.

Right now, hundreds of contracts for community based mental health services and programs funded by the Department of Health are due to end 30 June 2015.

While we understand the Government will be formulating its response to the National Mental Health Commission's Review of Mental Health Services and Programmes, the continued uncertainty is now resulting in staff attrition and service wind down. This issue has now reached crisis point.

Our Mental Health Parliamentary Advocacy Day on 11 February 2015 brought this to the attention of the Parliament, with our members receiving a good hearing from many parliamentarians, including members of Government, but as yet we have not received any definitive advice regarding the future of programs. Some agencies have indicated that without this advice, they will have to give staff notice of termination of employment in a matter of days. This ongoing uncertainty is causing a huge disruption to organisations and, increasingly, deep anxiety amongst the people they serve.

Following the Mental Health Parliamentary Advocacy Day we were delighted that Minister Fifield was able to provide some measure of certainty for community based mental health services and programs funded by the Department of Social Services.

We thank you for giving this matter your urgent attention and providing certainty for the vulnerable Australians who depend on these services.

Cc: The Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for Health

Sincerely



**Mental Health
Australia**



Frank Quinlan, CEO
Mental Health Australia



Sue Murray, CEO
Suicide Prevention Australia



Tom Baxter, CEO
Ostara Australia



Chris Tanti, CEO
headspace



Tony Holland, CEO
OzHelp Foundation



David Meldrum, Executive Director
Mental Illness Fellowship
of Australia



Arthur Papkotsias, CEO
Neami National



Gerry Naughtin, CEO
Mind Australia



Jonathan Nicholas, CEO
ReachOut



Helen Christensen, Executive
Director
Black Dog Institute



Jaelea Skehan, Director
Hunter Institute of Mental Health



Jack Heath, CEO
SANE Australia





Brendan Maher, General Manager
R U OK? Limited



Joy Gillett, CEO
Australian Rotary Health



Dr Richard Oades, CEO
Pathways Southwest



Adjunct Prof Kim Ryan, CEO
Australian College of Mental
Health Nurses



Nic Bolto, Managing Director
Olympus Solutions



Adrian Buckley, CEO
Pathways



Jane Henty, Executive Officer
Mental Health Carers
ARAFMI Australia



John Malone, Executive Director
Aftercare



Betty Kitchener AM, CEO
Mental Health First Aid Australia



Wilfred Rath, CEO
Richmond Fellowship ACT



Dr Cathy Kezelman AM, President
Adults Surviving Child Abuse



Annette Tubnor, CEO
Family Support Newcastle





Joe Calleja, CEO
Richmond Fellowship WA



Jennifer Beveridge, CEO
Eating Disorders Victoria



Kim Koop, CEO
Psychiatric Disability Services of
Victoria (VICSERV)



Jenna Bateman, CEO
Mental Health Coordinating
Council



Chris Jones, CEO
Anglicare Tasmania



Marcelle Mogg, CEO
Catholic Social Services Australia



Lyn Morgain, CEO
cohealth



Sam Refshauge, CEO
Batyr Foundation



Michelle Graeber, CEO
Anxiety Recovery Centre Victoria



Jenny Smith, CEO
Council to Homeless Persons



Butterfly
Foundation for Eating Disorders

Christine Morgan, CEO
Butterfly Foundation



Emma King, CEO
Victorian Council of Social Service





Vernon Knight, Executive Director
Mallee Family Care



Suzanne Greenwood, CEO
Catholic Health Australia



Debbie Childs, Executive Director
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Rod Astbury, CEO
WA Association for Mental Health



Lorrae Loud, CEO
Lamp Inc



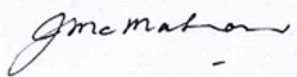
Melody Edwardson, CEO
Queensland Alliance



Ross Womersley, Executive
Director
South Australian Council of
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Peter Ruzyla, CEO
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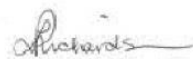
Janne McMahon, Chair and
Executive Officer
Private Mental Health Consumer
Carer Network (Australia)



George Tambassis, National
President
The Pharmacy Guild of Australia



Terri Smith, CEO
PANDA



Linda Richardson, Senior Manager
Mental Health Services
Partners in Recovery, Perth
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Liz Crowther
Liz Crowther, CEO
MI Fellowship



Darra Murphy, President
Australian Society for
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Relationships Australia.



Alison Brook

Alison Brook, CEO
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Julien McDonald

Julien McDonald,
Executive Director
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Rob Ramjan

Rob Ramjan AM, CEO
Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW



Lyn English

Lyn English
NMHCCF Consumer Co-Chair

Elida Meadows

Elida Meadows
NMHCCF Carer Co-Chair



Christopher John

Christopher John, CEO
StandBy Response Service



Vivienne Miller

Vivienne Miller, Director
TheMHS Learning Network



Glenys Wilkinson

Glenys Wilkinson, CEO
Australian Association of
Social Workers



Maria Brett

Maria Brett, CEO
Psychotherapy and Counselling
Federation of Australia



Sam Davidson-Fuller

Sam Davidson-Fuller,
Executive Officer
Mental Illness Education ACT



John McGrath

John McGrath AM, Chairman
Mental Health
Professionals Network





A proven program for mental wellbeing

Clare Guilfoyle, CEO
Grow



Geoff Harris, Executive Director
Mental Health Coalition of SA



Sally Gibson, Executive Officer
Women's Mental Health
Network Victoria



Victorian Transcultural
MENTAL HEALTH

Daryl Oehm, Manager
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ACT Mental Health
Consumer Network



Joanne Toohey, A/CEO
The Benevolent Society



Jen Dalitz, CEO
Peer Support Australia



Christopher John, CEO
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Trudy Hanson, Manager
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Ara Cresswell

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Fay Giallussi, CEO
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Living Australia



Gordon Gregory

Gordon Gregory, CEO
National Rural Health Alliance



Jane Hayden

Jane Hayden, CEO
Lifeline

