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## National Cabinet meeting marks historic day for mental health in Australia

Mental Health Australia has welcomed today's National Cabinet's focus on the increase of mental illness and anxiety in the community as a result of COVID-19, and the opportunity to discuss the National Mental Health Commission's mental health and wellbeing pandemic plan.

Mental Health Australia CEO Dr Leanne Beagley said to see mental health reform and service provision on the national agenda at this time is crucial to the short and long term health of our communities.

"Today – Friday 15 May 2020 – is an historic day for mental health reform in Australia. It is a day where our nation's leaders have sent a clear message that our mental health is just as important as our physical health," said Dr Beagley.

"To emerge from this pandemic in good health, the mental health of our community will need to be addressed now and into the coming months, and that's exactly what has started to happen from Wednesday's announcement of a Deputy Chief Medical Officer for mental health, and now at today's National Cabinet meeting."

"In a week where the World Health Organization has encouraged nations to urgently address the current and emerging mental health impacts of COVID-19, our leaders are again at the forefront on the world stage, which is no surprise considering Dr Brendan Murphy's exemplary leadership as Chief Medical Officer."

"His guidance, and the leadership shown at the National Cabinet, has helped steer our nation to a safer place. Australia has emerged as a global leader against this pandemic, and now we can add mental health planning and preparation to the strong and influential physical health plans that have already been implemented."

"The National Mental Health Commission has presented the mental health and wellbeing pandemic plan and at Mental Health Australia we are looking forward to working with our members and stakeholders to build on this plan, and emerge from this crisis in the best mental and physical health possible."

"This should now drive our attention to careful implementation and planning so that together we have a real impact for people living with distress and mental ill health, and their families, carers and friends."

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**Media Contact: Lach Searle – 0488 076 088**  
[Lachlan.Searle@mhaustralia.org](mailto:Lachlan.Searle@mhaustralia.org)

