

Charter 2020: Time To Fix Mental Health

The Hon Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

16 September 2019

Dear Prime Minister

Re: Charter 2020: Time To Fix Mental Health

We the undersigned have been very encouraged by your commitment to improving Australia's mental health.

We the undersigned have been encouraged by your Treasurer's comments in his 2019 budget speech that "mental health is an issue of deep concern to all Australians."

We the undersigned have been encouraged by your personal commitment to reducing youth suicide and Indigenous suicide, and by the personal passion of your Minister for Health to act on lasting mental health reform.

And we the undersigned welcomed the Coalition Government's strategic vision in establishing a Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health. An Inquiry that has received over 500 submissions, and an Inquiry that will provide your Government with a once in a generation opportunity to fix mental health in Australia.

In support of your reform agenda, we have developed a consensus statement. Enclosed with this letter is our Charter 2020: Time To Fix Mental Health outlining nine key areas of mental health reform – all agreed by the undersigned.

We the undersigned stand ready to assist you and your Government to implement the very real reforms that will be required as a result of the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss our shared ambitions with you, and would invite you to do this on Tuesday 26 November, 2019 at the Mental Health Australia Members Policy Forum at Parliament House in Canberra.

It is time to fix mental health. Let's not miss this important and lifesaving opportunity.

Sincerely,

Australia's mental health requires urgent action. The Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health provides a once in a generation opportunity to realise our nation's mental wealth, and to finally fix our ailing mental health system. We know that investing in mental health provides substantial personal and economic benefits. We know what to do.

It's time to fix mental health.

 Rebecca Culverhouse, CEO Accoras	 Dalane Drexler, Executive Officer ACT Mental Health Consumer Network	 Dr Andrew Young, CEO Aftercare	 Chris Jones, CEO Anglicare Tasmania
 Rita Brown, President Australian BPD Foundation Limited	 Associate Professor Vida Bliokas, President Australian Clinical Psychology Assoc.	 Eimear Muir-Cochrane, President Australian College of Mental Health Nurses	 Bridgit Hogan, Executive Officer Australian Music Therapy Association
 Annie Butler, Federal Secretary Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation	 Peter Eastwood, President Australasian Sleep Association	 Nic Brown, General Manager Balyr	 Michael Geary, CEO Banyule Community Health
 Scientia Professor Helen Christensen AM, Director Black Dog Institute	 Cathy Kezelman, President Blue Knot Foundation	 Professor Ian Hickie, Co- Director Brain and Mind Centre	 David Carmody, Director Call to Mind
 Sandy Paton, President Capricorn Community Development Association	 Lisa Kelly, CEO Carers ACT	 Ara Cresswell, CEO Carers Australia	 Hon John Watkins AM, Chair Catholic Health Australia
 Dr Ursula Stephens, Chief Executive Officer Catholic Social Services Australia	 Nicole Bartholomewus, Interim CEO Cohealth	 Bill Gye OAM, CEO Community Mental Health Australia	 John Mendoza, Director ConNetica
 Tony Lawson, Chair Consumers Health Forum of Australia	 Robert Hunt, CEO Dietitians Assoc. of Australia	 Lana Schwartz, President Employee Assistance Professionals Association of Australia (EAPAA)	 Bill Gamack, CEO EPIC Assist
 Anita Hobson-Powell, CEO Exercise and Sports Science Australia (ESSA)	 Mohammad Al-Khafaji CEO Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia.	 Patrick Lawrence, CEO First Step	 Mark Orr AM, CEO Flourish Australia
 Michael Thorn, CEO Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE)	 Arabella Gibson, CEO Gidget Foundation Australia	 David Butt, CEO Grow	 Jason Tretlowan, CEO headspace
 Liz Mullinar, CEO Heal for Life	 Tom Nehmy, Director Healthy Minds	 Debbie Childs, CEO HelpingMinds	 Nicole Steers, Acting CEO Jobs Australia
 Ellie Hodges, Executive Director Lived Experience Leadership and Advocacy Network	 Jocelyn Bignold, CEO McAuley Community Services for Women	 Professor Bruce Bonyhady AM Executive Chair & Director Melbourne Disability Institute	 Frank Quinlan, CEO Mental Health Australia
 Jeremy Coggin, President Mental Health Carers Australia	 Jenny Learmont, President Mental Health Carers NSW	 Geoff Harris, Executive Director Mental Health Coalition SA	 Simon Viereck, Executive Officer Mental Health Community Coalition ACT
 Carmel Tebbutt, CEO Mental Health Coordinating Council NSW	 Connie Digolis, CEO Mental Health Council of Tasmania	 Maxine Griffiths, CEO mental health families and friends TASMANIA	 Shannon Anderson, Acting CEO Mental Health First Aid
 David Moran, Director Mental Health Partners	 Chris Gibbs, CEO Mental Health Professionals Network	 Tony Stevenson, CEO Mental Illness Fellowship Australia	 Bernadette Edelbuttel, Program Manager Mentis Assist
 Robyn Hunter, CEO Mind	 Donella Mills, Acting Chair National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)	 David Moody, Acting CEO National Disability Services	 Dwayne Cranfield CEO National Ethnic Disability Alliance
 Nicky Bath, Executive Director National LGBTI Health Alliance	 Eileen McDonald, Carer Co-Chair National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum	 Lorraine Powell, Consumer Co-Chair National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum	 Tom Dalton, CEO Neami National
 Kim O'Neill, CEO On The Line	 Kathi Boorman, CEO One Door Mental Health	 Professor Pat McGorry AM, Executive Director Orygen	 Maria Brett, CEO Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA)
 Terri Smith, CEO Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Australia (PANDA)	 Dr Yvonne Luxford, CEO Post and Ante Natal Depression Australia (PANDSI)	 Dr Stephen Carbone, Chair Prevention United	 Janine McMalen, Chair & Executive Director Private Mental Health Consumer Carer Network
 Terry Selvin, CEO Public Health Association of Australia	 Michelle O'Flynn, CEO Queensland Advocacy Inc.	 Jacklyn Whybrow, Acting CEO Queensland Alliance for Mental Health	 Katherine Newton, CEO R U OK?
 Ashley de Silva, CEO ReachOut	 Dr Harry Nespolon, President The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)	 Associate Professor John Allan, President Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists	 Dr Martin Laverty, CEO Royal Flying Doctor Service
 Jennifer Bowers, CEO Rural and Remote Mental Health	 Pattie Chugg, CEO Shelter TAS	 Gail Mulcair, CEO Speech Pathology Australia	 Damian Ferrie, CEO Star Health
 Joe Calleja, Interim CEO St. Bartholomew's House	 Nieves Murray, CEO Suicide Prevention Australia	 Margo Lyndon, Chief Executive Officer SuperFriend	 Marie Piu, CEO Tandem Victoria
 Vivienne Miller, Executive Director The Mental Health Services Learning Network	 Frances Mirabelli, Chief Executive Officer The Australian Psychological Society	 Simon Ruth, CEO Thorne Harbour Health	 Paul Linossier, CEO Uniting
 Adrienne Picone, CEO Volunteering Australia	 Elizabeth Crowther, CEO Wellways	 Taryn Harvey, CEO Western Australia Association for Mental Health	 Rev Keith Garner AM, CEO & Superintendent Wesley Mission
 Jenny Kitchin, CEO Woden Community Services	 Tracy Adams, CEO Yourtown	 Arthur Papakostas, CEO Youth Focus	 Sue Murray, Practice Leader Zero Suicide

This is our Charter 2020: Time To Fix Mental Health

STRIKE A NEW NATIONAL AGREEMENT FOR MENTAL HEALTH

An agreement that delivers integration and coordination of mental health services, including agreed objectives, indicators, monitoring arrangements and funding between all levels of government.

BUILD A MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM THAT IS TRULY PERSON LED

A system centred on what people with lived experience mental health issues and their carers say they need, including the structures and processes required to ensure co-design of services and programs.

ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Eliminate stigma and discrimination and address the social and environmental determinants of poor mental health including housing, employment, trauma, physical health, income support, and environment.

INVEST IN EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION

Programs and supports that intervene early to prevent people from becoming mentally ill and stop emerging mental illnesses from becoming more severe.

FUND INDIGENOUS MENTAL HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SUICIDE PREVENTION ACCORDING TO NEED

Including dedicated strategic responses co-designed and co-implemented with Indigenous leaders, consumers and communities. This should be guided by the National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing 2017-2025, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy 2013, and the Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Declaration.

PROVIDE INTEGRATED, COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Full suites of services and programs required to support mental health and ensure intensive, team based and integrated care is available for all those experiencing a mental health crisis, and addressing the needs of people who have traditionally missed out, such as culturally and linguistically diverse, LGBTIQ+ populations, and people living with intellectual disability.

EXPAND COMMUNITY BASED MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Ensure there are psychosocial programs and team based care options to provide community based care and to avoid hospitalisation wherever possible.

SUPPORT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Invest in systematic workforce development, including peer workers, volunteers, paid and unpaid carers, community workers and clinicians.

BUILD AN EVIDENCE BASED, ACCOUNTABLE AND RESPONSIVE SYSTEM

Ensure constant research and evaluation, transparent monitoring of prevalence, availability of services and programs, system performance and gaps. Ensure targeted and timely response to identified gaps, system failures and poor performance.

