

# 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.

## 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 of 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 2017-2023, 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.

