

Media Release

Mental Health sector unites to reform the system in Australia

The Mental Health Council of Tasmania (MHCT) has joined with over 100 other organisations from across Australia to launch the Charter 2020 on mental health. The Charter outlines the 9 key areas identified by the sector as needing swift action by all levels of Government in order to create a mental health system that meets the needs of Australians across every stage in their life.

The draft report of the Productivity Commission Inquiry into mental health is set to be released on 31 October. Connie Digolis, MHCT CEO, is encouraged by the focus on reform and action that the Commission will hopefully bring about.

“The Charter 2020 is a way for the sector to show a united front on what action needs to be taken across the whole country. More specifically, for Tasmania we can demonstrate how we are uniquely placed to drive reforms that will create a world-class mental health system that focuses on integration across all the different services and putting the individual at the centre of their own care,”

“We are beyond needing a time for talking and planning, now is a time for real action. In Tasmania we have an opportunity to leverage off of existing plans and strategies already in progress, we now need to see that demonstration of unity from State and Commonwealth governments – A coordinated approach to every facet, including investment.”

“I don’t see why as a small state, we couldn’t achieve big goals, like becoming the most mentally healthy state in the country. It’s not a competition, but we could make it something to aspire to, a place where people want to live and thrive,” said Ms Digolis.

While all of equal importance, of the 9 key areas, MHCT would like to draw attention to the opportunities that investing in early intervention and prevention as well as expanding community based mental health care would bring to our state.

“We know that the Productivity Commission will look at how investment in these areas can actually save money long-term for Governments. What it will also indicate is that keeping people well and out of hospital will save lives and increase their capacity to live long, happy and contributing lives. We will also need to drastically expand, develop and diversify our workforce in Tasmania in order to improve our system,” said Ms Digolis.

A full copy of the Charter 2020 and the letter to the Prime Minister can be found here:

<https://mhaustralia.org/time-fix-mental-health>

-Ends-

Media Enquiries: Cat Delpero on 0499 303 007 or Nick Sullivan 62249222 and nsullivan@mhct.org

Please include the following crisis support services for any story regarding mental health or suicide.

Lifeline: 13 11 14 www.lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467 www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au

beyondblue: 1300 22 4636 www.beyondblue.org.au

More information on safely reporting on mental illness or suicide can be found at

<https://mindframe.org.au/> and <https://www.tascharter.org/>