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MEDIA RELEASE

Supporting the Mental Health and Wellbeing of all Tasmanians

As the peak body for community managed mental health services, the Mental Health Council of Tasmania (MHCT) has today welcomed the Liberal Party's policy announcements, designed to transform the state's mental health system. Included within the announcements are a number of policies that strongly align with MHCT's election campaign, 'A Tasmanian State of Mind', which is the culmination of many years of research, planning, consultation, and development.

The MHCT campaign advocates for an increased focus on prevention and early intervention by ensuring all Tasmanians have access to the resources, education and supports they need to be mentally fit and healthy, wherever they live work or play. It puts greater emphasis on the importance of community, acknowledging the vital role that our local governments, businesses, clubs, and community groups playing in looking after and increasing our mental wellbeing.

MHCT CEO, Connie Digolis, said that while there will always be a need to have accessible acute mental health services, "Tasmania now has an opportunity to build something great. For far too long we've been focusing solely on providing support to people once they become unwell. Instead, we must now look towards a preventative approach, that helps people to maintain and boost their mental wellbeing, and supports them to stay mentally healthy, rather than reacting when their mental health declines."

'A Tasmanian State of Mind' also calls for the implementation of the 'Tasmanian Peer Workforce Development Strategy' launched in 2019, the Strategy is an action plan, to embed people with lived experience of mental ill-health within Tasmania's mental health system, leveraging their unique skills and insights to create an enriched experience for people seeking support.

Ms. Digolis said she was pleased that the Liberal Party was committed to implementing the Strategy. "There is well-documented evidence on the benefits of building a robust peer workforce, not only for consumers, but also for their carers, families and friends. Through their experience with the mental health system, peer workers are uniquely placed to understand and assist others during their recovery journey, and contribute to better outcomes for consumers."

The MHCT campaign also calls for an expansion of the Strategy to include a Youth Peer Worker Model, with a focus on developing the skills and capacity of Tasmania's young people, so they can support each other's mental wellbeing.

Further detail on 'A Tasmanian State of Mind' can be found via the MHCT website, at www.mhct.org/tassiestateofmind

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