

Premier, The Hon. Jacinta Allan MP
Treasurer, Mr. Tim Pallas MP
Minister for Mental Health, The Hon. Ingrid Stitt MLC



December 2023

Dear Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Mental Health,

Victoria is missing its Consumer Leadership Agency (Rec 29 Mental Health Royal Commission)

As leaders of Victoria's community mental health and advocacy sector, we are seeking confirmation that the Victorian Government remains committed to establishing the Consumer Leadership Agency, as outlined in Recommendation 29 of the Mental Health Royal Commission.

We are seeking a clear timeline for when it will commence operation, noting the centrality of this reform to the Royal Commission's vision for a Victorian mental health system with consumer leadership at its heart.

The Consumer Leadership Agency is intended to be part of the key enabling infrastructure that drives system transformation, with a critical remit that includes:

- **fostering consumer-created initiatives for healing and support** so that peer led options are a genuine part of the service mix
- **developing and connecting consumer leaders** who can be influential in sector governance, management and development
- **being a sector backbone and offering co-location services** that provide back-of-house support for new consumer-led organisations and services to start, grow and develop
- **uplifting mental health system capability** through transformative partnerships, assisting services and agencies to build their proficiency in genuine lived experience involvement and informing the implementation of major reforms
- **strengthening the peer workforce** through opportunities and networks to build collective skills and consistent ways of working.

The foundations for Victoria's new mental health system are currently being laid. With the Consumer Leadership Agency absent from the rapidly changing landscape, consumer leadership is being sidelined and important opportunities to influence the shape and direction of systems transformation are being missed. The Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing has highlighted this as a matter of public concern.

While mindful of the constrained budget environment Victoria faces, we believe that for a relatively small investment, the Consumer Leadership Agency will make a substantial contribution towards the changes to Victoria's mental health system that we are all working towards.

Accordingly, we urge the Allan Government to allocate funding for the immediate establishment of the Consumer Leadership Agency. This is a priority issue for our sector.



Craig Wallace
CEO, Victorian Mental
Illness Awareness Council



Clare Davies
CEO Self Help Addiction
Resource Centre



Marcelle Mogg
CEO, Mental Health Victoria



Tom Dalton
CEO Neami



Juanita Pope
CEO, Victorian Council of
Social Service



Mark Orr AM
CEO Flourish Australia



Deb Tsorbaris
CEO, the Centre for Excellence
in Child and Family Welfare



Marie Piu
CEO, Tandem



Dr Rosemary Charleston
Director Centre for Mental
Health Learning



**Foundation
House**

The Victorian Foundation
for Survivors of Torture Inc.

Paris Aristotle AO
CEO, Foundation House



Gill Callister PSM
CEO, Mind Australia



Dr Kate Johnston-Ataata
Chair, Women's Mental
Health Alliance



Chris Christoforou
CEO, Victorian Alcohol &
Drug Association



Derm Ryan
Acting Co-CEO Youth Affairs Council Vic



Laura Collister
CEO, Wellways Australia