



Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Mental Health  
Minister for Ageing  
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Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission  
570 Bourke Street  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Commissioners

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING COMMISSION**

I am pleased to provide you with an overview of my strategic priorities to enable alignment with the activities of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission (MHWC) during this important phase of transition and establishment. This includes assuming the functions of the Mental Health Complaints Commission (MHCC) and taking on new and expanded functions under the *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022* (the Act).

The Victorian Government is committed to improving the mental health and wellbeing system for all Victorians and realising a transformed system as envisioned by the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. The establishment of the MHWC on 1 September 2023 is an important milestone in achieving this vision.

The MHWC, as an independent statutory authority, has an important role in monitoring and publicly reporting on the performance, quality and safety of the mental health and wellbeing system and elevating leadership of people with lived experience.

The Commission also takes on the important function of receiving and managing complaints from consumers, carers, and others interacting with mental health services. As we have heard through the Royal Commission's work, this is an essential function to enable feedback and support system improvement. Importantly, this function provides an important pathway for people with lived experience to have input into the care that impacts them.

### **Strategic Priorities**

#### *1. Transforming Victoria's mental health and wellbeing system*

The MHWC, Department of Health and other entities under the Act play an important role in working together transform the mental health and wellbeing system as recommended by the Royal Commission. This will require demonstrating to the sector new approaches and practices to deliver on the following priorities:

- supporting the delivery of improved, responsive and person-centred mental health and wellbeing services
- enhancing lived experience leadership in the sector and supporting the full and effective participation of people with a lived experience
- supporting implementation of the new Act and its mental health and wellbeing principles
- delivering a clear and coordinated approach to oversight and quality improvement for mental health and wellbeing services, including clarifying roles and responsibilities across the department, MHWC and other relevant entities
- monitoring and measuring the performance of the mental health and wellbeing system in line with the department's Mental Health and Wellbeing Performance and Outcomes Framework, once released.

2. *Supporting the accountability and improvement of mental health and wellbeing services*

To support change across the mental health and wellbeing system, all entities have a role in ensuring they:

- operate transparently and accountably
- adopt contemporary approaches and practices to oversee the quality and safety of services, aligned with recommendations made by the Royal Commission and the requirements of the Act
- provide education and support to the sector to enhance services, while ensuring compliance, where necessary
- identify opportunities for increased service improvement and accountability.

3. *Enhancing communication and engagement with the sector and community.*

To support trust and confidence in the mental health and wellbeing system, entities will play an important role in:

- engaging early with stakeholders across the sector to inform planning, oversight and regulatory approaches
- communicate publicly to stakeholders as early as possible the priorities, strategic directions and commitments to service accountability and improvement
- working together to coordinate stakeholder communications, where appropriate, to improve understanding across the mental health and wellbeing sector of the role of entities and government in relation to quality, safety, performance and regulation.

I understand that the Commissioners and department are developing a 'ways of working' document to promote cooperation and this will be supported by other instruments, including a memorandum of understanding for corporate support by the department, an information sharing agreement and other protocols, as required.

I acknowledge the significant efforts in establishing the MHWC on 1 September 2023 and look forward to hearing more about your activities in your first year.

Yours sincerely,



**Ingrid Stitt**  
Minister for Mental Health  
Minister for Ageing  
Minister for Multicultural Affairs

10 / 11 / 2023

