



## Joint Media Release

Community Mental Health Australia (CMHA), National Mental Health Consumer Alliance (NMHCA), Mental Health Carers Australia (MHCA), and Mental Illness Fellowship Australia (MIFA) welcome the recent mental health commitments from both major parties ahead of the 2025 federal election. However, we urgently need a transformed mental health system.

### Decades of decay and delay

The National Mental Health Commission's Report Card 2023 found there is "little data available on the impact and efficacy of the billions invested by governments", and yet governments continue to pour money into these same services. After decades of drift, we call for a transformed mental health system that is *fit for purpose*.

Kerry Hawkins, CMHA CEO said, "It's a question of priorities - will the next federal government prioritise genuine system transformation or deliver more of the same? Will we continue to pour more dollars into the same services trying to fix people *or* we do the long overdue work necessary to build a transformed system that includes a human rights approach to addressing the social determinants of mental health."

Pricilla Brice CEO NMHCA said "We are disappointed that in the first federal election since the Lived Experience peak bodies were established neither major party has sought our views. We are calling for a system that tackles the social and economic drivers of mental health, like housing and income support, one that upholds our fundamental human rights. To drive system transformation, we need more consumer voices at the highest level in the public service and across more policy and project areas."

Katrina Armstrong CEO MHCA, said, "Family, carer and kin needs have yet again been overlooked. The assumption that investments in mental health and suicide prevention programs will reduce or avoid the need for supports for their families, carers and kin is just wrong. It is no secret that the Carer Gateway does not adequately address the needs of needs of mental health families, carers, and kin, who face distinct and complex challenges compared to other carers."

Tony Stevenson, CEO MIFA, said "Despite the unmet psychosocial supports needs being identified in the Productivity Mental Health Inquiry in 2020 for over 600,000 Australians with moderate and high-need mental health challenges, no plan, no funding, and no commitments have been made to close this gap."

### We are at a fork in the road.

We call on all parties to commit to building a transformative mental health system that complements clinical care with psychosocial supports, embeds lived experience leadership at every level, and ensures families, carers and kin are no longer left to fill the gaps alone.

Kerry Hawkins

CEO

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