

Mental Health Council of Tasmania responds to Liberal Party's mental health policy announcement

The Mental Council of Tasmania [MHCT] has now reviewed this morning's mental health policy announcement released by the Tasmanian Liberal Party.

Given that evidence shows us non-acute supports both effectively reduce the need for hospitalisation, and support people more effectively during their post-acute journey, MHCT welcomed the focus on community-based, co-delivery options for Tasmanians described in the package, and the restated target to reduce suicide rates by 20% by 2022.

MHCT is heartened by several recovery-based initiatives outlined in the Liberal Party's package, including:

- acknowledgement of the need for facilities providing both clinical and non-clinical supports, demonstrated by the commitment to reopen the Peacock Mental Health Facility in North Hobart as a step-up, step-down model of care and to develop the Mistral Place facility
- a promise to significantly invest to increase our skilled clinical workforce to deliver supports within these new models of care
- acknowledging the integral and vital role a sustainable and viable peer workforce can provide to the Tasmanian mental health system by ensuring a commitment to support this important cohort, including peer support workers for Tasmanians living with eating disorders
- a mental health consumer housing strategy that incorporates elements of the successful HASI model already operating in other states, to ensure the provision of secure, ongoing housing with appropriate supports in place
- A new mental health taskforce to drive continuous improvement and collaboration between all contributors within Tasmania's mental health system

MHCT CEO, Connie Digolis, congratulated the Tasmanian Liberal Party.

"The prevalence of mental ill health in our communities means there are few more important announcements than this one for our communities during this election campaign. Upon review, MHCT has identified several elements within the Liberals' package that will support a community-based, collaborative approach for our mental health system, consumers, carers and workers, providing a platform to further strengthen our State's Rethink mental health plan. We encourage the Tasmanian Liberal Party to hold to their series of commitments to improve the mental health of all Tasmanians, including their stated commitment to support young people and their families.

"We also welcome the Liberal's new promise to explore ways to improve how we implement our state's mental health plan through an integrated taskforce, and their stated commitment to support rural and remote communities" said Ms Digolis.

*ENDS

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