



## Media Release

**24 February 2019**

### **Mental Health Victoria welcomes broad Terms of Reference for Royal Commission**

Mental Health Victoria today welcomed the announcement of eminent Commissioners and wide-ranging Terms of Reference for Victoria's Royal Commission into Mental Health.

Mental Health Victoria has been a vocal public advocate for the Royal Commission since the commitment for the landmark inquiry was made by Premier Daniel Andrews at the Kyneton Men's Shed in October 2018 during the election campaign.

Mental Health Victoria CEO Angus Clelland said the Royal Commission is an historic undertaking for mental health, which for too long has been the poor cousin of the health system.

"We are particularly encouraged by the emphasis in the Terms of Reference on prevention and early intervention and the focus on the needs of people living with mental illness and the needs of their families and carers," Mr Clelland said.

"We are also heartened by the appointment of Penny Armytage as the Chair of the Royal Commission into Mental Health and of her fellow Commissioners Associate Professor Alex Cockram, Professor Allan Fels AO and Professor Bernadette McSherry."

"They bring outstanding expertise and understanding to this historic process, which promises profound change to the lives of mental health consumers, carers and families in Victoria and a pathway for systemic change here and in other states and territories."

Mr Clelland said the leadership shown by the Andrews Government in establishing the Royal Commission into Family Violence has led to meaningful reform in that area.

"We are optimistic that this will be replicated in the mental health system," he said.

Mental Health Victoria commends the Victorian Government for the extensive public consultation process on the Terms of Reference which saw more than 8,000 submissions and 23 regional roundtables held with a multitude of stakeholders.

"We expect that a Royal Commission will expose the serious gaps in our ailing mental health system and that its recommendations will bind future governments into funding the system to meet the mental health needs of all Victorians," Mr Clelland said.

"The broad Terms of Reference and the timeframe out to November 2020 will provide the Commissioners with ample scope to critically examine all parts of the mental health system and ensure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to contribute."

Mental Health Victoria encourages consumers, families, carers and service providers to contribute – not only to report where things have gone wrong, but to highlight what has worked well and why.

Media please note: Angus Clelland is available for comment on today's announcement.

Please contact Marie McInerney on 0418 273 698 to arrange an interview or for further information.