

## MEDIA RELEASE



### **A call for investment in Community Managed Mental Health services in NSW: Pre-Budget Submission**

**4 March 2024:** Mental Health Coordinating Council (MHCC), the peak body for community managed mental health organisations (CMO) in NSW, welcomes the opportunity of the forthcoming NSW Budget to present a pre-budget submission to Government in which they advocate four overarching investment priorities.

Dr Evelyne Tadros, CEO MHCC, says: *“These are by no means ‘new asks’ but are long overdue investments that have become increasingly urgent in what is a dynamic service delivery environment stretched to its limit.”*

**These priorities include a strong focus on the need to invest in workforce and strengthen planning to better forecast for the future, and for services to be staffed by a continuously skilled and sustainable workforce, that has the capacity to grow and meet future demands across a diversity of clinical, support and peer roles.** It is vital that the Government acknowledges the projected demand and increase investment to address current and future shortages, particularly in the peer workforce.

“To ensure a sustainable CMO sector, and to be able to recruit, retain and grow the workforce, both peer and non-peer workers must feel valued and equitably resourced, and this requires investment in training and capacity building,” Dr Tadros writes.

**MHCC is highlighting the importance of supporting people to stay well, thrive and meet their aspirations in the community. It points to the recent evaluation of HASI/CLS services in 2022 which demonstrates the effectiveness from both a cost benefit as well as an individual, family and community perspective.** The net cost saving per person is estimated at \$86,000 over five years, but despite this most compelling evidence, further expansion of these services has not been confirmed. MHCC urges the Government to expand these services by providing a further 10,000 HASI/CLS packages, at an additional investment of \$365 million over four years.

**The need to ensure safe transitions from acute inpatient settings to community and minimise admissions and re-admissions by establishing a network of ‘step-up step-down’ services across NSW is an important consideration.** MHCC recommends adding an extra 130 places, to ensure more people have access to residential programs particularly in rural, regional and remote locations. MHCC estimates the need for an additional 2,000 people a year to have access to services across the state, at an annual cost of \$19.11million.

Importantly in MHCC’s submission, Dr Tadros seeks to draw attention to the necessity to ensure that MHCC can remain a strong membership organisation that can continue to support a growing and sustainable mental health CMO service sector. To maximise outcomes and build the workforce, it is vital that the sector has the support of a peak body

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that is well resourced through increased core funding provided by the NSW Ministry of Health. Such funding enables MHCC to carry out its essential leadership objectives.

[Link to Submission](#)

**For media queries or to request an interview with MHCC CEO Dr Evelyne Tadros**, contact Annika Nystrom, Communications & Engagement Manager on 02 9060 9633 or [Annika.n@mhcc.org.au](mailto:Annika.n@mhcc.org.au)

## **Key facts:**

### **Community Managed Mental Health Organisations**

The CMO workforce makes up 25% of the mental health workforce in NSW.

The CMOs deliver 38% of the mental health services in NSW.

Spending on services delivered by CMO makes up only 8.5% of the NSW mental health budget.

There is significant evidence that quality services delivered in the community provide better outcomes for people, carers and their families, and take pressure off other parts of the health system.

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