



JOINT STATEMENT

No health without mental health

Include Mental Health Reform in the National Health Reform Agreement

As representatives of Australia's leading mental health organisations, we come together to call for immediate and coordinated action to address the critical gap in mental health care between Federal and State/Territory services.

This gap currently leaves Australians without adequate mental health support, leading to significant distress in the community and increased cost to the health system.

Federal and State/Territory Governments now have the opportunity to bridge this gap, by agreeing to joint funding arrangements and a roadmap for long-term reform within the upcoming National Health Reform Agreement (NHRA), as recommended by the Productivity Commission and the NHRA Review.

We acknowledge the work started by both Federal and State/Territory Governments towards long-term mental health reform. We urge the Federal and State/Territory governments to continue to prioritise this issue and take decisive, coordinated action to create a mental health system that leaves no one behind.

Key Asks:

1. **Long-Term Funding and Reform:** Federal and State/Territory Governments must agree on funding arrangements and a long-term roadmap for reform to close the service gap for the 'missing middle' and people with complex mental health needs. Reform is required to provide consistent, integrated, and comprehensive care that bridges the current divide between primary and specialist services. Adequate funding is essential to ensure that community-based services are accessible, well-resourced, and capable of providing the necessary support.
2. **Full-Day Mental Health Ministers Meeting:** This crucial negotiation should take place during the planned full-day Mental Health Ministers Meeting, involving Federal and State/Territory Ministers for Health and Mental Health. Such a dedicated and focused meeting will allow for in-depth discussions and the development of a unified, collective approach to addressing this pressing issue, including discussions on funding, service integration and whole-of-government approaches. The involvement of key stakeholders and experts in these discussions, including centring the voices of people with lived experience and their families, carers and kin, will ensure that the agreed solutions are both person-centred and effective.
3. **Inclusion in National Health Reform Agreement:** Mental health reform should be included in the upcoming NHRA to ensure new mental health services can be sustainably funded across Governments. Embedding these commitments within the NHRA, as recommended by the Productivity Commission and the NHRA Review, will provide a framework for accountability, transparency, and continuous evaluation of progress. It will also facilitate the long-term sustainability of mental health services for the 'missing middle', their families, carers and kin, and provide a foundation for long-term reform and more integrated services.

By addressing these key areas, we can make significant strides in bridging the gap in mental health care and ensuring that all Australians have access to the support they need.

The mental health sector remains committed to working collaboratively with all levels of government to achieve these goals and improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Australians.

-ENDS-

Media enquiries: Paige Pollard, media@blackdog.org.au, 0455 100 277



Signatories:

- Arafmi Ltd Carers Queensland
- Australian College of Mental Health Nurses
- Australian Society for Psychological Medicine
- BEING – Mental Health Consumers NSW
- Bipolar Australia Limited
- Black Dog Institute
- Mental Health Australia
- Mental Health Carers Australia
- Mental Health Carers NSW
- Mental Health Coordinating Council
- Mental Health Families and Friends Tasmania
- Mental Illness Fellowship Australia
- Northern Territory Mental Health Coalition
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP)
- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) NSW/ACT
- SANE Australia
- Tandem Carers Victoria
- Wayahead (Mental Health Association NSW)
- Yourtown