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QAMH welcomes Parliamentary inquiry into mental health in the NDIS

The Queensland Alliance for Mental Health (QAMH) welcomes the announcement that the Australian Parliament Joint Standing Committee on the NDIS has established an inquiry into the provision of services under the NDIS for people with psychosocial disabilities related to a mental health condition.

QAMH Chief Executive Officer Kris Trott acknowledges that the NDIS is an excellent system with the potential to change the lives of thousands of Australians, providing them with individualised packages to support their personal circumstances, but sees the Inquiry as a positive step.

“Over the last six months, our members have been telling us of the many challenges they have been experiencing in the NDIS transition, and how mental health has not been a perfect fit into a system designed for disabilities,” Ms Trott said.

“We, along with peak bodies across Australia, are seeing more and more consumers, carers and service providers concerned with the NDIS’ ability to meet the needs of all consumers in the mental health sector when the NDIS is fully rolled out in 2019.

“We need clarity around how several implementation issues will be managed, such as what support will be received by individuals that will be ineligible for the Scheme.

“As we have stated before, it is critical that those ineligible for NDIS are not left without support, that funds are not withdrawn before the NDIS funding arrives and that service delivery pricing is appropriate for the workforce.

“This Inquiry will provide QAMH and service providers with the opportunity to express their concerns through the submission process.”

Community Mental Health Australia’s (CMHA) President Liz Crowther said that a focus on rehabilitation is critical for people with mental health concerns, however, for some, this may not be possible under the NDIS.

“Funding for a number of Federally funded mental health programs is being removed and placed in the NDIS and many of the people who now receive these services won’t be eligible for the NDIS,” Ms Crowther said. “The directive has also been given to Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to not commission psychosocial services.

“This means that a growing number of people will not get their community-based rehabilitation needs met. We are growing increasingly concerned about what will happen to these people.

“CMHA is strongly advocating for options to be developed for funding services for people living with a mental illness who are ineligible for the NDIS and currently access Federally funded programs, ensuring their rehabilitation and disability support needs are met whether eligible or not.

“CMHA welcomes this inquiry and looks forward to engaging with the Committee to properly investigate and examine these vital issues.”

Submissions to the inquiry close on 27 February 2017 and more information is available at http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/National_Disability_Insurance_Scheme/MentalHealth

#ends

Enquiries regarding this media release can be directed to Manager, Business Development and Membership, Sue Pope on 0408 438 624 or email spope@qamh.org.au.

To arrange an interview with Ms Kris Trott, CEO of QAMH or one of our member organisations, please call our office on 07 3252 9411.