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Mental health sector unites to highlight shortcomings in Fifth National Mental Health Plan

More than 50 mental health sector organisations have today written a joint letter to the Prime Minister and First Ministers outlining the many shortcomings in the draft Fifth National Mental Health Plan released in October and call for decisive action.

The letter draws attention to the alarming gaps between previous commitments by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on mental health and the consultation draft for the Fifth National Mental Health Plan.

Mental Health Australia CEO Mr Frank Quinlan says early and consistent sector-wide feedback on the draft plan indicates it reflects old modes of thinking and does not reflect a changing world.

“It appears from the draft plan that governments intend to renege on past COAG commitments,” said Mr Quinlan.

“We are united on the key features of a world leading mental health system that supports consumers and carers to live contributing lives.”

Mental Health Australia’s submission on the draft Fifth National Mental Health Plan calls for a substantially re-drafted Plan to:

- clarify roles and responsibilities of governments, and take a whole of government approach to mental health
- include targets and indicators
- reorient investment towards early intervention and prevention
- expand and embed community services, close to need
- be subject to careful revision and be submitted to Ministers in mid 2017, rather than being rushed through in early 2017.

Signatories to the joint letter include the National Mental Health Consumer & Carer Forum, Suicide Prevention Australia, Orygen, Sane Australia, ReachOut, R U OK?, the Black Dog Institute and a further 50 organisations for a total of 57.

To see the joint letter [click here](#).

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