



**Australian Government**  
**National Mental Health Commission**

Reference: EB13/3528

Dear X

I am writing in regard to the Australian Government's election commitment to review existing mental health programmes and to seek your assistance with this undertaking.

The Government has assigned the National Mental Health Commission (the Commission) with assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of existing mental health services and programmes in the mental health sector, and if these are being targeted as effectively and productively as possible. The Review will take a whole-of-life view to the range of programmes that support individuals experiencing mental health difficulties and their families and other support people to lead a contributing life and to engage productively in the community.

I attached the Terms of Reference for your information which set out the scope and timeframe for the review (Attachment A). The Australian Government Minister for Health, the Hon Peter Dutton MP, has previously written to your jurisdiction's Health Minister in regard to the Review and provided these Terms of Reference. Given our February Preliminary Report is to focus upon Commonwealth programmes that have a primary focus upon mental health, I invite your early views upon what you consider to be the 'top 5' issues in regard to these in the context of your work. This may include issues such as efficiency and effectiveness, funding reporting requirements, and red tape, duplication and/or co-ordination, access and eligibility criteria. Your high level advice on these would be appreciated by **10 February 2014**.

You will note from the Terms of Reference that the Review takes a whole of system view; and is to provide the Government with useful advice on Commonwealth, State and non-government organisation mental health programmes. Your co-operation in this undertaking is most crucial and will be sincerely appreciated.

Our second report in June will address the role of state and territory-funded programmes that have mental health as their primary focus, as part of the broader system and network of programmes for people with mental health needs. It is anticipated that this Interim Report will address issues of efficiency and effectiveness, duplication or gaps in programmes to meet the needs of local communities. We are also considering the particular challenges of providing services in rural, regional and remote Australia, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

To meet the review timeframes we require this information for our second report by **COB Friday 24 February 2014**. Please find attached a template to assist in capturing this information

(Attachment B). Given the timing of the Review, I would appreciate you nominating a contact officer as a matter of urgency. The Commission's contact on this matter is Ms Georgie Harman, Deputy CEO, who is available on telephone 02 8229 7510 or by email at: [georgie.harman@mentalhealthcommission.gov.au](mailto:georgie.harman@mentalhealthcommission.gov.au).

Thank you for your co-operation, and please do not hesitate to contact me directly on 02 8229 7515 should you wish to discuss this request further.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the Review further.

Yours sincerely

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David Butt  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
31 January 2014

Attachments:

A – Review Terms of Reference

B – Input template