

# Media Release

The Hon Dan Andrews MP  
Premier



**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Sunday, 24 February 2019

## EXPERTS TO LEAD THE MENTAL HEALTH ROYAL COMMISSION

The Andrews Labor Government has appointed respected public policy expert Penny Armytage as the Chair of the Royal Commission into Mental Health and released its terms of reference.

Ms Armytage will be joined by Associate Professor Alex Cockram, Professor Allan Fels AO and Professor Bernadette McSherry as the Commissioners who will lead the landmark inquiry. The Labor Government has already committed to implementing each one of their recommendations.

Ms Armytage has played a leading role in major health and human service sector reform. She has most recently served as the Chair of the Transport Accident Commission and the President of Berry Street.

Associate Professor Cockram has 30 years' experience in health, including clinical and academic experience. She is an Associate Professor in the University of Melbourne's Department of Psychiatry and a former Chief Executive Officer at Western Health.

Professor Fels is the former Chair of the National Mental Health Commission and a leading Australian economist and lawyer best known for his role as Chairman of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

Professor McSherry is an internationally-recognised legal academic in the fields of criminal law and mental health law, and President of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Psychiatry, Psychology and Law.

The Labor Government also released the Terms of Reference that will guide the Royal Commission. The Terms of Reference have been devised after consultation with the experts in the mental health sector and the community.

The Government held more than 20 round tables across the state to hear from the experts and from Victorians who have lived experiences of mental health.

More than 8,000 Victorians made a submission online to help shape the terms of reference, which include:

- How to most effectively prevent mental illness and suicide
- How to deliver the best mental health outcomes and help Victorians navigate the system
- How to best support the needs of family members and carers of people living with mental illness
- How to improve outcomes for those in the community at greater risk of experiencing poor mental health
- How to best support people living with mental illness and problematic alcohol and drug use

The Commission will deliver a preliminary report by November 30 2019 and a final report in October 2020.

If you or someone you know is in crisis or needs support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or BeyondBlue on 1300 224 636.

### Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*"We don't have all the answers when it comes to mental health. That's why we're drawing on the experts who know the sector best and the Victorians who have lived experiences to help us find them."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Mental Health Martin Foley

*"One in five Victorians will experience mental illness this year, and too many of those will lose their lives to suicide. We need a new approach to mental health, and a Royal Commission will help deliver a new system."*

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