



NSW Consumer Advisory Group – Mental Health Inc.
ABN 82 549 537 349

The following letter of support for a National Human Rights Act was sent out to the Prime Minister, the Attorney General, the Federal Minister of Health and Ageing, the Shadow Federal Minister for Health and Ageing, the State Minister for Health and the Shadow Minister for Health.

Re: Human Rights Act

The NSW Consumer Advisory Group – Mental Health Inc. (NSW CAG) is the peak, independent, statewide organisation representing the views of mental health consumers at a policy level, working to achieve and support systemic change. Our vision is for all mental health consumers to experience fair access to quality services that reflect their needs.

NSW CAG is writing to support all of the recommendations made by the National Human Rights Consultation Committee in the report that the Committee recently gave to the Federal Government.

At NSW CAG we hear through our core work that there is much more work to be done to promote and protect human rights for people living with a mental illness, which continue to be infringed. This is indicative of the need for a stronger human rights commitment from the Australian Government.

Reports from the United Nations Committees have expressed concern that the rights to equality and non-discrimination are not comprehensively protected in Australia in federal law. Further identified by the Committee were the insufficient measures that have been taken by the State party to ensure an adequate standard of living for people with disabilities.

NSW CAG considers that improving human rights protections for people living with mental illness is imperative given the marginalisation, stigma and discrimination that is faced in all aspects of their lives.

NSW CAG strongly supports the introduction of a national Human Rights Act to ensure the increased consideration to human rights when services are being planned, implemented, delivered and evaluated. A national Human Rights Act would also increase the consideration made to human rights when new laws and policies are being formulated by government, and when existing laws and policies are reviewed.

Implementation of a national strategy to promote and protect human rights is crucial to move towards a shared commitment between the Australian Government and the community.

At NSW CAG we look forward to the announcement in the coming months that you and the Australian Government will support and implement the recommendations of the National Human Rights Consultation committee.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Oakley', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Karen Oakley
Executive Officer
NSW Consumer Advisory Group – Mental Health Inc.