



07/09/2023

For immediate release

Health Consumers' Council supports the Voice to Parliament

The Health Consumers' Council Management Committee have confirmed their support for the Voice to Parliament and constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As the peak body for health consumers in WA, Health Consumers' Council is critically aware of the positive outcomes that flow from people being involved in the decisions that affect their lives. As Federal Minister for Health and Aged Care Mark Butler has said, he "can't think of an area of policy where that Voice will be more important and more valuable than in health". And from Professor Fiona Stanley, "mainstream governments have failed Aboriginal people from before birth, right through to death... and the reason why they fail so expensively is because they don't have an Aboriginal voice".

The Indigenous Voice to Parliament Referendum will be held on 14 October 2023. If passed, it will introduce changes to the Constitution of Australia to better represent the country's First Nations peoples, by providing parliamentary recognition and a permanent voice in the decisions that affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

In Yunupingu's words from 2016: "What Aboriginal people ask, is the modern world now makes the sacrifices necessary to give us a real future. To relax its grip on us. To let us breathe. To let us be free of the determined control exerted on us to make us like you. And you should take that a step further, and recognise us for who we are. And not who you want us to be. Let us be who we are. Aboriginal people in a modern world – and be proud of us. Acknowledge that we have survived the worst that the past has thrown at us. And we are here with our songs, our ceremonies, our land, our language, and our people, our birthing and our full identity. What a gift this is that we can give you. If you choose to accept us in a meaningful way."

Health Consumers' Council believes the establishment of the Voice is a decisive occasion to recognise the right of Aboriginal people to have a say on decisions about Aboriginal people.

We know that some discussions relating to the Voice may be having a heavy impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We encourage everyone in the WA community to empower themselves with the knowledge they need to have respectful and thoughtful conversations about the referendum.

If you don't know, then go (find out).

MEDIA RELEASE



HEALTH CONSUMERS'
COUNCIL

Support is available for anyone impacted by these discussions.

- Lifeline WA - 13 11 14
- 13YARN - 13 92 76 (for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples)
- Beyond Blue - 1300 22 4636

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Mallika Macleod, Chair
Richard Brightwell, Deputy Chair
Rebecca Carbone, Secretary
Ian Ludlow, Treasurer
Michael Crowley, Member
Meredith Waters, Member
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About Health Consumers' Council

Health Consumers' Council (WA) Inc. is an independent, not for profit organisation that was set up in 1994 to provide a way for consumer, patient, carer, and family voices to be heard at every level of the health system. HCC also offers an independent advocacy service to support the healthcare rights of individuals with an issue in the WA Health System.

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