



Recommendation 29 Campaign FAQs

Why should the government fund Rec 29 given the budget pressures?

- Former Premier Daniel Andrews said: ‘Building a quality mental health system from the ground-up won’t be easy and it won’t be quick. But when the cost of not acting is measured in lives, we can’t afford to fail.’
- Consumer lived experience must be at the heart of Victoria’s new mental health system or we will keep hearing the same tragic stories that the Royal Commission heard for years to come.
- If the Government remains genuine about transformational change and elevating lived experience then establishing the key consumer-led infrastructure called for by the Royal Commission must be a top priority.
- Small investment, high return. For a relatively small investment, Rec 29 will make a substantial contribution towards the changes to Victoria’s mental health system that we are all working towards. By driving the consumer-led creation of new and different approaches it will mean future mental health and wellbeing responses will better reflect community aspirations and needs.
- What’s the cost of funding same-old? More of the same isn’t what the Royal Commission’s levy to fund the system was for. More of the same wasn’t the recommendation. More of the same isn’t the solution. Our Agency offers something new, innovative, and exciting.
- It will be a nation leading initiative that will be widely supported and celebrated by mental health consumers and their allies.

What different will it make for people living in regional Victoria?

Implementation of Rec 29 will be something any Victorians with lived experience of mental ill health and psychological distress – wherever they live – can be part of. For someone living in regional Vic this might include involvement in:

- Incubation and transformation events to connect people with experiences of mental health and psychological distress, learn from one another and spark new ideas
- Developing and trialling local consumer-designed supports that are alternatives to the current medical and clinic models
- Training, networking and development opportunities as consumer leaders and workers
- Support for providing genuine lived experience involvement in regional services

Why can’t VMIAC take on the Rec 29 agency functions?

Although they share the vision of elevating the knowledge and voice of consumers, VMIAC and the consumer-led agency recommended by the Royal Commission have very different purposes and functions.

The Rec 29 agency will focus on service design and innovation, development of a consumer-led sector; consumer leadership and workforce capability; and embedding genuine lived experience involvement across the mental health and AOD systems. Our Agency will provide leadership and collaboration inside the system by showing to the system, the different ways of knowing, being and relating to distress.

Recommendation 29 Campaign FAQs

Why can't VMIAC take on the Rec 29 agency functions? (continued)

VMIAC is focussed on consumer advocacy: at individual, sector/organisation and systems levels. The Royal Commission was explicit that advocacy should be independent in funding and governance and hold services accountable (including services fostered through the new consumer led agency). VMIAC will continue to advocate for your individual rights and systemic reform, and we are best-placed to do this when we can remain an independent consumer peak body focused on these tasks.

VMIAC and Our Agency will work closely together, but real systemic change will require us to each play our separate roles in this shared vision.

Isn't the Department's lived experience branch already doing this work?

The Victorian government is undertaking a range of projects on consumer workforce and leadership.

Some of this work would better sit with the Rec 29 agency. A live risk of it's continued absence is that other's move in the role and space intended for it, but without the governance or accountabilities back to consumers.

As an independent not for profit, the Rec 29 agency should not be captive to government and will reflect the priorities of and be accountable to the consumer community through its consumer-led governance.

Sign the Community Letter

You can show your support for funding recommendation 29 by signing our community letter here:

<https://ouragency.good.do>

More information and resources

Get more information and find resources to help you share the campaign with your networks on the VMIAC website below:

www.vmiac.org.au/fundouragency

