



# Mental Health, Wellbeing, and Alcohol and Other Drugs Ministerial Advisory Panel – Communique Meeting 5 March 2026

This Communique provides stakeholders with information and outcomes from the meeting of the Ministerial Advisory Panel (MAP) held on 5 March 2026. The MAP provides direct feedback to the Minister for Health; Mental Health (Minister) about system performance and reform progress. This advice contributes to the delivery of a system that adopts a person and family-centred approach and encapsulates whole of system priorities. The MAP is also a forum through which the Minister provides updates to the mental health and alcohol and other drugs sectors on strategic priorities.

## Minister's Update

The Hon. Pierre Yang MLC, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health; Mental Health, Co-Chaired the meeting on behalf of the Minister, and provided the Minister's Update. The Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategy 2026-2031 in the final stage of consideration by Government prior to public release. Federally, plans are underway to establish a National Alcohol and Other Drugs Working Group to support National Drug Strategy governance, and public consultation on the future of the Commonwealth Drug and Alcohol Program is ongoing. Brief updates were also provided on the positive progress of the Preventative Health Roundtables and the Health Ministers Meeting.

## Forensic mental health

Members discussed challenges and opportunities in forensic mental health; from when a person is taken into custody, through to post-release. Opportunities were identified in the context of emergency department (ED) presentations and improving outcomes for vulnerable cohorts at risk of avoidable interactions with police. Members also identified key considerations to strengthen system responses, including the role of housing and social supports. ED alternatives for individuals experiencing alcohol and other drug-related issues were identified along with cross-agency collaboration underway across government. The importance of continuing to progress existing reform initiatives was raised as key, including the Mental Health Commission's Community Treatment Support and Emergency Response program, and embedding culturally appropriate, trauma-informed approaches across government.

## Change Management plan from the Independent Governance Review

Members considered the Change Management Plan supporting implementation of the Independent Governance Review, including the development of Lived Experience Inclusion Plans (LEIPs) across Health Service Providers, Department of Health and Mental Health Commission. Acknowledgement was given to the considered approach undertaken by the Joint Leadership Group to progress organisational readiness and lived experience inclusion. Members discussed opportunities to improve lived experience engagement in the development of LEIPs and the risks involved with relying on lived experience workforces (e.g., peer workers) to lead reform within existing structures.

## MAP Performance Review

Members considered the findings of the MAP Performance Review survey report and provided feedback. Members discussed the importance of out-of-session engagement, feedback loops and timely distribution of meeting materials. Acknowledgement of the inclusion of member-generated items within the future workplan, to support a more responsive and member-informed approach. The Minister's appreciation for the advice provided by the MAP was reiterated, and the ongoing contribution of members to system reform was acknowledged.

## Joint Leadership Group Update

Members noted a brief update from the Joint Leadership Group and noted that the February meeting was cancelled.

## The next MAP meeting is scheduled for 4 June 2026.