

## **A/COMMISSIONER'S SPEECH - MENTAL HEALTH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – MEETING 1<sup>1</sup>**

- Good morning everyone and welcome to the first MHEC meeting.
- Thank you Colleen for your time and coming in to conduct the Welcome to Country for us today. For those of you that don't know, Colleen is the Chair of the Alcohol and Other Drug Advisory Board and is also a member of the CMC, with the CMC's first meeting to be held on Monday.
- Thank you also to Amanda for your Acknowledgement of People with Lived Experience. I know everyone would agree with me that listening to you both was very inspiring and has helped to set the scene for the MHEC and why we are here today.
- I would like to echo the Minister's comments that the establishment of the MHEC is a very exciting development.
- I am personally looking forward to working closely with you all to tackle the significant challenges we have ahead of us.
- And I know Sophie Davison, Chief Medical Officer, Mental Health and my Deputy Chair feels the same way.
- I would particularly like to welcome Amanda Waegeli, the consumer representative, and Kerry Hawkins, the family/carer representative, on the MHEC and the CMC.
- Their presence here is a real demonstration of our commitment of bringing lived experience to the heart of policy decision-making.
- As I have been reflecting to many people recently, I believe that the easy wins, the 'low hanging fruit' as I like to say, have all been achieved.
- What faces us now is the really hard challenges that can only be achieved by all of us working together to achieve real, sustainable system-level change.
- Its not going to be easy and it's not going to be a quick fix either.
- The first agenda of the MHEC is setting the scene for a few big things that we need to undertake over the next four years.
- This is the only way to achieve a mental health, alcohol and other drug system that meets the growing needs and expectations of the Western Australian community.
- We knew the system was under pressure prior to COVID-19.
- But COVID-19 has ramped up and exacerbated these issues, with a larger and brighter spotlight on the needs and expectations of the system.
- We must address this challenge.
- I also acknowledge the issues across the system and funding allocation not being perfect.
- Where there are issues or initiatives across the whole system, such as a new model of service, evaluation or system funding allocations, this would go through the MHEC so that there is a system-wide view, transparency and support.
- Local leadership is important and I encourage you to make sure you are feeding back to your respective areas and energising your teams to connect and drive this reform agenda.
- To assist you in this we will also be providing a communique after each meeting and a website portal that will have the Terms of Reference, MHEC Charter, Communiques and the like that your teams can access at anytime.
- Lastly, it's important that the governance arrangements work for all members, making it possible for all of you to raise issues of system-wide importance that

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<sup>1</sup> This is an abridged version of the speech given by the A/Commissioner at the MHEC meeting on 19 August

become apparent to you. And this can be done through the call out of agenda items by the Secretariat or raising with me as the Chair directly.

- This is the first meeting and we are still fine tuning the processes.
- The Minister made it clear that he wanted the first meeting to be in August.
- And we have done a lot in standing the MHEC and CMC up in a short amount of time, including getting the Secretariat up and running.
- It was also important to get the Terms of Reference for the Committee and the Charter done. The Minister stipulated that he wanted the Charter developed to guide the operations of the MHEC and CMC.
- Thank you everyone for being here today and I look forward to us achieving great things together.