

31 March 2021

Re: National Voice to Parliament Submission

The Northern Territory Mental Health Coalition (the Coalition) is the peak body for the community managed mental health sector in the Northern Territory. As a peak body, the Coalition ensures a strong voice for member organisations and a reference point for governments on all issues relating to the provision of mental health services in the Northern Territory. The Coalition provides advice and input into mental health care policy and associated challenges around service delivery to all levels of government and contributes to national mental health networks and associated peak bodies.

The Coalition writes this submission in full support of the three key positions proposed below:

1. The government must honour its election commitment to a referendum once the model for the Voice has been settled;
2. Enabling legislation for the Voice must be passed after a referendum has been held in the next term of Parliament; and
3. The membership model for the National Voice must ensure previously unheard Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the same chance of being selected as established leadership figures.

From the perspective of the Coalition, the importance of enshrining a National Voice to Parliament through constitutional recognition will have widespread benefits for the social and emotional well-being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. The effects of being truly represented at the national level must not be overlooked. This can only be done through legitimate and credible constitutional recognition, which advances self-determination and has the overwhelming support of the Australian public.

For further information or clarification, please contact Policy Officer, April Kailahi, phone: 08 8948 2246; email: [policy@ntmhc.org.au](mailto:policy@ntmhc.org.au).

We acknowledge the Larrakia people,  
the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live, work and walk.