



Government of **Western Australia**  
**Mental Health Commission**

Our ref : MHC18/57022  
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Mr Darren Foster  
Director General  
Department of the Premier and Cabinet

By email: [Aboriginalpolicy@dpc.wa.gov.au](mailto:Aboriginalpolicy@dpc.wa.gov.au)

Dear Mr Foster 

**PROPOSAL TO STRENGTHEN GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY IN ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

Thank you for your letter dated 2 July 2018, regarding the proposal to establish an independent statutory office to strengthen government's accountability to Aboriginal people and for Aboriginal affairs.

The Mental Health Commission (MHC) recognises the importance of delivering services and developing strategies to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people and communities, and acknowledges that this is best done with and by Aboriginal people, communities and Elders. Through the implementation of the Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025, the MHC is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people and communities accessing services and supports across the service spectrum, from prevention and community support, through to acute treatment services.

The proposed plan to establish an independent statutory office tasked at addressing government accountability and advocating for Aboriginal people in Western Australia is a positive step toward raising existing issues and advocating for change. Further, in my view, the proposal could be strengthened to enable the proposed statutory office to not only advocate but also to have the authority to take action. This would strengthen the office's ability to positively impact social, economic, cultural, health and mental health outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to review your proposal and provide comment.

Yours sincerely



Timothy Marney  
COMMISSIONER

2 August 2018