

Inquiry into the Decriminalisation of Certain Public Offences, and Health and Welfare Responses

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Dear Committee Secretary,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Inquiry into the decriminalisation of certain public offences, and health and welfare responses.

The Queensland Mental Health Commission (the Commission) welcomes the committee's inquiry and supports the approach to ensure that people who experience intoxication from alcohol and other drugs in public, including those living with a mental illness and/or problematic alcohol and other drug use, have access to appropriate health supports and treatment options.

The Commission supports a health response rather than a criminal justice response to reduce harms for people experiencing vulnerabilities. We also strongly support diversion programs for people experiencing alcohol and drug related issues.

The inquiry again highlighted the over-representation of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders in the criminal justice system. First Nations people account for half of the offences investigated by this inquiry.

The Commission advocates for supports for a number of education programs about drug and alcohol use delivered by First Nations health organisations, in particular the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council. These programs are particularly useful for young people in communities.

We wish the Committee well with this important inquiry and look forward to its recommendations.

Kind regards

Amelia

Amelia Callaghan

Executive Director

Queensland Mental Health Commission



PO Box 13027 George Street Brisbane QLD 4003



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*I acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this country.*

I pay my respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

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