

27 November 2024

Appointment of Chairperson for National Peak Body

The National Mental Health Consumer Alliance – the national consumer peak body for people with lived experience of mental health challenges– is pleased to announce the appointment of Mathew Fagan as its Chairperson, effective immediately.

Mathew Fagan (he/him) has worked in the not-for-profit and charitable sector for more than 25 years. In that time, he has supported dozens of local, state-based and national organisations to deliver tangible outcomes for mental health consumers and communities. Mathew has diverse experience in governance, strategic planning, service design and program evaluation. In addition to projects with mental health consumers, Mathew has worked with First Nations corporations; migrant and refugee organisations; children and youth services; social enterprises; and family and sexual violence specialist services. Mathew has also held senior positions in government. Mathew is currently a director of consultancy firm Social Justice Communications. He holds degrees in law and communications.

The appointment of Mathew follows the recent appointment of the Alliance's CEO, Priscilla Brice, as well as the appointment of the Alliance's National Policy and Research Manager, Jennifer Nixon.

The Alliance was incorporated nearly 12 months ago and has been in full-time operation since July when it won an [Australian Government](#) competitive tender to be the National Peak Body for mental health consumers. It is currently running the nation's first [human rights survey](#) of people with lived experience of mental health challenges and aims to report on its findings in 2025. The organisation has also contributed to the reform of the National Mental Health Commission; raised awareness of unmet mental health need in regional and remote Australia; provided advice and advocacy on the List of NDIS Supports; and supported proposals from lived experience leaders for a Restorative Justice Process for people harmed in the mental health system. The Alliance is currently running two consultations with mental health consumers across the country.

The Alliance Board expressed its enthusiasm for Mathew's appointment, stating, "We are delighted that Mathew will be leading our board through the initial growth phase of the Alliance. He has been involved with the Alliance in an advisory capacity over the past year and has a solid understanding of both the peak body, and the consumer movement in Australia.

We are confident that Mathew will use both his lived expertise and governance skills to ensure the success of the organisation.”

Mathew said, “I am humbled by the opportunity to support the extraordinary outcomes lived experience leaders and advocates are achieving everyday for all mental health consumers across the nation. I will do my best to build on the hard work already done in setting up the Alliance for long-term impact.”

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