



Minister for Mental Health; Disability Services; Child Protection

Your ref: Petition No 66

Hon Simon O'Brien MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Legislative Council Committee Office
18-32 Parliament Place
WEST PERTH WA 6000

Dear Chairman

PETITION NO 66 – LAMP INC

Thank you for your correspondence dated 25 November 2014 regarding Petition No 66 seeking increased funding for LAMP Inc by the State Government.

Please find attached a response prepared by the Mental Health Commission (MHC), in consultation with the Disability Services Commission that addresses the terms of the petition and the submission from the principal petitioner and tabling Member.

If you have any queries, please contact Mr David Axworthy, Acting Director, NGO Purchasing & Development at the MHC on 6272 1200 or by email on david.axworthy@mentalhealth.wa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Morton'.

Helen Morton MLC
MINISTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Att. 14 JAN 2015

PETITION NO 66 – LAMP INC

RESPONSE FROM THE MINISTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Background

Petition No 66 tabled in Legislative Council by Hon Adele Farina on 12 November 2014 and referred to the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs with 1,029 signatories, aims to “*strongly support LAMP Inc, provider of high quality support services to people with mental illness, their families and carers in the lower South West, including early intervention and preventative programs*”. The petitioners specifically request the Legislative Council to:

- support continued Federal and State Government block funding for LAMP Inc;
- call on the State Minister for Mental Health to lobby the Federal Government to continue federal block funding to enable LAMP Inc to continue its services and programs in the lower South West; and
- order a Standing Committee of the Legislative Council to inquire into:
 - the impact of the removal of block funding on Not-for-Profit service providers, their clients and the community, including the impact on clients and the community if the Not for Profit service providers are forced to close their doors due to a lack of block funding; and
 - the impact of the current implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) on the continued long term sustainability of locally based Not for Profit mental health service providers, especially those delivering mental health services, in Western Australia and other jurisdictions in Australia.

This response addresses the request from the Chairman of the Committee, Hon Simon O’Brien, dated 25 November 2014 for the Minister for Mental Health to comment on the terms of the petition and key points raised.

1. Support continued Federal and State Government block funding for LAMP Inc.

The State Government continues to provide funding for mental health services in the South West including \$328,019 in 2014/15 to LAMP Inc for personalised support and family and carer services under a Service Agreement with the Mental Health Commission (MHC) until June 2016 with the option of two 12 month extensions. A further \$73,684 will also be received by LAMP Inc in 2014/15 from the MHC via a non-recurrent grant for accommodation support services under the Homelessness National Partnership Agreement.

2. Call on the State Minister for Mental Health to lobby the Federal Government to continue federal block funding to enable LAMP Inc to continue its services and programs in the lower South West.

At this stage, in the reform of Western Australia's mental health system the focus of future purchasing intentions by the Western Australian State Government will be guided by the recently released *The Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025* (the Plan). The development of the Plan creates an opportunity to provide a consistent guide to State and Commonwealth Government investment in services. The Plan uses an evidence based national modelling tool that outlines the optimal mix of services to meet the demands of our population. A more consistent response to consumer and carer needs is more likely to be achieved through such a planned approach compared to short term reactions to transitional funding arrangements negotiated between the State and Commonwealth governments.

The National Mental Health Commission has also recently completed but not yet released a *National Review of Mental Health Programs* at the request of the Commonwealth Government. States and Territories have provided input into this review and the potential impacts on future planning and implementation of mental health services are matters that remain under discussion. The Minister for Mental Health; Disability Services had requested a copy of this review from the federal Minister, however this has not been received. It should be emphasised however that the State and Commonwealth Governments are committed to working together to minimise duplication and ensure that service users experience an integrated system.

3. Order a Standing Committee of the Legislative Council to inquire into:

- **the impact of the removal of block funding on Not-for-Profit service providers, their clients and the community, including the impact on clients and the community if the Not-for-Profit service providers are forced to close their doors due to a lack of block funding; and**

The allocation of Commonwealth funding is not within the State Government's control or jurisdiction to investigate. Furthermore, the State is not in a position to fund Commonwealth purchased services in the event that a particular organisation is not a successful tender applicant. As such, the Minister for Mental Health would not support an inquiry into Commonwealth procurement processes and allocation of funding.

- **The impact of the current implementation of the NDIS on the continued long term sustainability of locally based Not for Profit mental health service providers, especially those delivering mental health services, in Western Australia and other jurisdictions in Australia.**

At present, all mental health services provided as part of the NDIS are to be in-kind contributions, so any withdrawal of Commonwealth block funding is not related to NDIS directly. It would also be premature to inquire into the short or long term impact of cashing out mental health programs to fund the NDIS, as it is unclear which, if any, of the Commonwealth-funded programs will be cashed out in Western Australia in 2015/16. It would therefore be impossible to estimate at this point what block funded programs would remain for people with mental illness who are not eligible for the NDIS in Western Australia.