National Mental Health Commission holds second meeting of Advisory Council

Communique

The National Mental Health Commission's (the Commission) Advisory Council held its second meeting on 17 August 2026. The meeting was chaired by the Commission's CEO, David McGrath.

The Council was established to give strategic advice and expert insight to the Commission to support its work to help to improve Australia's mental health system. The Council brings together national leaders and subject matter experts, including those with lived experience.

At the meeting:

1. The Chair reflected on the outcomes of the Council's inaugural meeting, including the establishment of the Council's Terms of Reference and its role in providing strategic advice on the Commission's priorities and key areas of work.
2. Members received an update on the main findings from the new National Report Card Environmental Scan 2025 and discussed the value of the Environmental Scan in providing a national picture of factors influencing mental health in Australia in 2025. Members noted the benefits of ongoing annual reporting.
3. Members considered opportunities for future Environmental Scans to further strengthen understanding of the range of factors that influence mental health and wellbeing across Australia.
4. Members considered key findings from the Commission's National Report Card 2025 ahead of its release. Members discussed the role of the National Report Card in highlighting strengths, challenges and opportunities across Australia's mental health system and considered the importance of continuing to strengthen the data and evidence base that informs national reporting.
5. Members received updates on several Commission projects. These projects aim to improve knowledge about the mental health system and support better use of evidence in funding, policy and system improvement
6. Members discussed the importance of involving people with lived and living experience throughout all stages of projects where possible. Members also considered the value of local, regional and place-based perspectives in informing national mental health initiatives.
7. Members also discussed the future National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement and considered the Commission's role in supporting accountability, transparency and reporting.
8. Members agreed that the next meeting would take place in late 2026.

The Advisory Council will continue to meet regularly. The Commission looks forward to working with Council members to support national conversations and improve mental health outcomes for people across Australia.