



30 October 2020

Dr Denise Riordan
Chief Psychiatrist
Office of the Chief Psychiatrist
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Dear Denise

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to the draft ACT Charter of Rights for People experiencing mental illness or mental disorder. This letter is a joint response from the ACT Mental Health Consumer Network (the Network) and Carers ACT.

We have reviewed the draft document and have decided, at this point, not to consult or provide detailed feedback from consumers and carers. We appreciate that your Office is trying to progress some outstanding work and that the desire in reviewing the charter was to inform consumers and align with other states. We believe however that the Charter needs to be reviewed and updates to reflect the current Canberra environment.

The original charter, *The ACT Charter of Rights for People who experience Mental Health Issues*, was co-designed in collaboration with carers and consumers and may be accessed at the following link: <https://www.actmhcncn.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/ACT-Health-Charter-of-Rights-pamphlets.pdf>.

We acknowledge that the existing charter requires updating and welcome the inclusion of Advance Consent Direction, however, this should be expanded to

include Nominated Person and Advance Agreement and reference to the *My Rights My Decisions Form Kit*. In addition, we have concerns in relation to the removal and/or rewording of a number of rights from the existing Charter that are significant to consumers and carers.

To be respectful of the work undertaken by consumers and carers in developing the original Charter we would recommend that rather than consulting on changes made to align with other states we work with the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist to co-design a revised and updated Charter.

We would like to work with you to implement a codesign process that involves the Network, Carers ACT and other relevant peak organisations within the ACT.

Yours sincerely



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Executive Officer
ACT Mental Health Consumer Network



Lisa Kelly
Chief Executive Officer
Carers ACT