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## New national mental health representatives push for change

**Two new Queensland representatives have been appointed to the National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum (NMHCCF) to advocate for and influence national mental health policy and reform.**

Queensland Mental Health Commissioner Ivan Frkovic today announced the new delegates as Tanya Kretschmann from Rockhampton, representing consumers, and Cheryl Rudorfer of Bundaberg, representing carers.

Mr Frkovic said these positions were vitally important, as there was so much change occurring in the mental health sector with the ongoing rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, expansion of mental health services across the state and new initiatives around safety and quality of mental health care.

Queensland's representatives will contribute to informing a number of national bodies, including government committees and advisory groups, professional bodies and other consultative forums.

"As national forum members, Tanya and Cheryl will be the voice of Queensland consumers and carers, bringing real life examples, issues and concerns to the ears of policy and decision makers," Mr Frkovic said.

"Both have a good grip on the systemic shifts underway and clearly demonstrate the critical analysis, communication skills and passion to make a difference.

"They are both already strong advocates for Queenslanders with a lived experience of mental illness, and will take this opportunity to push for positive change."

Ms Kretschmann is currently a Mental Health Consumer Consultant for the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service, with a strong interest in youth, adolescent and adult mental health. She holds a range of representative positions, including with the Consumer and Carer Committee of the Australian and New Zealand Academy for Eating Disorders and the Queensland Eating Disorder Advisory Group.

Ms Rudorfer has been a carer, and advocate for carers, consumers and their families for the past 13 years. She is a Peer Support Coordinator for Bundaberg Community Care Unit, as well as a Consumer Engagement Facilitator at Bundaberg Community Health, with an extensive community network.

Ms Kretschmann said: "It is important for people with lived experience to have a seat at the table to shape reform to mental health services, programs, legislation and strategy.

"I'd like to see greater focus on early intervention and prevention, especially for young people, and recovery-oriented care," she said.

Ms Rudorfer said: "Carers can be the forgotten parties in the mental health system, with many facing difficulties accessing help and support.



“My goal is to achieve greater fairness, recognition and support for carers and their needs.”

Mr Frkovic expressed appreciation to Queensland’s retiring NMHCCF members, Noel Muller and Peter Dillon, for their lengthy service to Queensland’s mental health consumers and carers.

Ms Kretschmann and Ms Rudorfer will attend their first NMHCCF meeting in March 2018.

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CONTACT: Robyn Oberg, 3405 9774 or 0434 987 212

