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Beyond Blue announces new Chair

ACCOMPLISHED business figure and former National Mental Health Commissioner Sam Mostyn AO will take up the role of Beyond Blue Chair when The Hon Julia Gillard's term ends this month following nine years of dedicated service.

Ms Gillard, who has chaired Beyond Blue for seven years, will continue with the organisation as a Beyond Blue patron, alongside Australia's Governor-General.

Ms Gillard said: "It's been a privilege to steward Beyond Blue, alongside my board colleagues, through a period of significant change for our country and I'm proud of all that the team has delivered for the community over this time."

"Beyond Blue has evolved and grown its free, 24/7 mental health supports and services; reassured and been there for Australians through the pandemic; delivered a foundational model for universal suicide aftercare; advocated for system and social change, and, most recently, signed a formal partnership agreement with our friends at Lifeline," she said.

"I've been with Beyond Blue since 2014 and I'm going to miss it but am thrilled to stay connected as a Patron. It's an incredible organisation which has achieved so much in its 23-year history. Beyond Blue's mission originally had been to reduce stigma and promote awareness. More recently, our contribution has been through service delivery. Now, for the next five years, we will sharpen that focus to earlier intervention and prevention, developing options that make it easier for people to get support for their mental health sooner."

"I'm delighted that Sam Mostyn, an impressive leader and formidable advocate across a range of disciplines, will Chair Beyond Blue through a new era of innovation, advocacy and social change."

Ms Mostyn is a prominent advocate for sustainability, gender equality and corporate governance across business, sport, climate change, the arts, policy and not-for-profit sectors. She was an inaugural commissioner with the National Mental Health Commission.

Ms Mostyn said: "The world we live in is bringing so much concern and anxiety for people. Global conflict, the pandemic recovery, economic upheaval and more frequent and intense natural disasters are placing significant pressure on our mental health and wellbeing – as individuals and as a community."

"As Beyond Blue embarks on its next five-year strategy, called *Strategy 2023+ Earlier, Easier, Together*, it feels right to step up and keep this important work going," Ms Mostyn said.

"I am looking forward to supporting Beyond Blue as it partners with the sector, governments, philanthropists, business, and the community to find productive solutions to the big issues in mental health because no individual or organisation can do this alone and no community should do this alone.

"Digital and other accessible supports and advocacy that addresses the determinants of health will be key focus areas as Beyond Blue works to support more people to get well, stay well and feel better sooner."

Ms Mostyn will formally take up the role on January 1, 2024. Planning for the transition of the Chair role has been underway for the past 12 months and was endorsed at Beyond Blue's final board meeting for the year, which took place in Melbourne yesterday.

ENDS

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