

Beyond Blue Chair Julia Gillard and Board directors respond to the Voice to Parliament referendum outcome

Beyond Blue Chair The Hon Julia Gillard AC, and Beyond Blue Directors Professor Helen Milroy AM and The Hon Ken Wyatt AM, today issued the following statement on the outcome of the Voice to Parliament referendum.

This is a moment of reflection for Australia.

While the referendum result is not the one Beyond Blue had hoped for, we remain hopeful that all Australians want to heal divisions and create a better future together.

First Nations peoples are nearly three times more likely to be psychologically distressed than other Australians, and twice as likely to die by suicide. Racism and exclusion harm mental health and wellbeing.

As the national depression and anxiety initiative, Beyond Blue is guided by evidence. For First Nations peoples, the research clearly shows that social and emotional wellbeing is strengthened when self-determination is at the heart of decision-making. That's why we supported the Voice and believe a First Nations community-led approach to mental health will lead to better outcomes.

We still believe Australians want a just and compassionate country.

We may have different experiences, cultures and views, but fairness and respect are values that will always unite us.

We believe Australians would agree that the gap in mental health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is not acceptable.

The referendum result will be distressing, particularly for many First Nations peoples.

We want to reassure everyone that Beyond Blue is available with free, immediate mental health advice and support for everyone. However you voted, whatever your views, Beyond Blue is here for you. Crisis support from First Nations counsellors is available from 13 YARN.

As we emerge from this chapter in our nation's story, we must maintain hope that a better future is possible. That this was not our only chance at healing.

Contact: media@beyondblue.org.au

Beyond Blue will not waiver in our advocacy and support for better mental health for First Nations peoples, standing proudly as allies in the ongoing pursuit of equality, inclusion and reconciliation.

We remain committed to the Uluru Statement from the Heart and open to its generous and dignified invitation to walk with First Nations peoples towards a better future and a more unified country. We hope you do too.

The Hon Julia Gillard AC, Professor Helen Milroy AM and The Hon Ken Wyatt AM, on behalf of Beyond Blue

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ATTENTION MEDIA: PLEASE USE THESE CONTACT DETAILS WITH YOUR STORIES

Beyond Blue Support Service: 1300 22 4636 or beyondblue.org.au

First Nations counselling: call 13 YARN