



Beyond Blue statement on the Voice to Parliament

29 May 2023

Beyond Blue wholeheartedly supports a First Nations Voice to Parliament.

As a bipartisan community-based organisation committed to enhancing Australia's mental health, we have long supported the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

We feel especially moved by the Statement's stirring appeal to the people of Australia for constitutional recognition:

“We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country. We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.”

When people have a say in their destiny – when they have a voice – there is hope.

Beyond Blue recognises that self-determination, which the Voice could help enhance, would give First Nations Peoples and communities a say in the policies that impact their lives, and this has the potential to support social and emotional wellbeing.

As a nation we need to acknowledge the complexity of the ongoing trauma and loss that First Nations Peoples experience due to colonisation. Such trauma is made worse by racism. Racism increases the risk of depression, anxiety and suicide, and with more racism comes more psychological distress.

Beyond Blue recognises that powerful forces inherent to First Nations cultures – resilience and connectedness to land, family, community, culture and spirituality – are vital sources of strength and healing. They can protect and promote the social and emotional wellbeing of First Nations Peoples.

The referendum is a chance to formally recognise the rights, cultures and histories of First Nations Peoples. It is a chance to come together and show who we are as a nation.

Beyond Blue commits to walking with First Nations Peoples towards a better future.

Beyond Blue is available to everyone, regardless of how they vote in the referendum.

We respect that people will have different views about the Voice and appeal to the community to conduct this national conversation in ways that are sensitive to the profound harms that racism and discrimination cause for First Nations Peoples.

For support, contact 13YARN or Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636 or visit beyondblue.org.au