

The Hon Greg Hunt MP

Minister for Health

PO Box 6022
House of Representatives, Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

The purpose of this communication is to lodge a formal complaint against the Australian Government Department of Health for systemic breaches of multiple health regulations and human rights. The attached report, *Prescribed Deaths – Life in The Killing Zone*, documents the areas in which the healthcare system has failed to meet safety standards for all Australians. The most vulnerable members of our society, including people with disability, the elderly, children, Indigenous Australians, first responders and veterans, are the most severely affected.

The report proposes a number of recommendations to immediately stop the adverse prescription drug events and deaths being suffered by too many Australians.

Some of the standards examined include protections under the:

- *Therapeutic Goods Act 1989*
- Medicare Benefits Schedule
- Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights
- National Standards for Mental Health Services
- United Nations Principles for the Protection of Persons with Mental Illness and the Improvement of Mental Health Care
- United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The report covers a diverse range of issues and breaches. The responsibility for the failures is attributable to multiple government and private organisations, most of which either report to, or receive funding from, the Department of Health. These organisations include:

- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP)
- Pharmacy Guild of Australia
- Pharmaceutical Society of Australia
- Headspace
- Medicare
- Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA)
- multiple PBS pharmaceutical sponsors.

The report is provided as a holistic and complete document to enable all issues to be examined concurrently and to understand the full impact on people with lived experience – of whom I am one.

The urgency of this matter cannot be understated. The current global health crisis has seen an increase in the number of Australians seeking help for mental health conditions. The issues examined in this report demonstrate that Australians will continue to be exposed to further adverse health events caused by systemic failures to provide safe healthcare if action is not taken.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Patrick O'Connor', written over a horizontal line.

Patrick O'Connor
Founder, The Killing Zone



03 July 2020

CC: Caroline Edwards, Acting Secretary, Department of Health