

**MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA  
AFTERNOON TEA  
TO MARK NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH MONTH 2022 IN TASMANIA  
REMARKS BY  
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, 17 OCTOBER 2022**

Welcome everyone to this very important event to mark National Mental Health Month 2022 in Tasmania.

I pay my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community and recognise their enduring culture and connection to land, sea and culture. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I commit to a future that listens to and respects Aboriginal stories, culture and history.

I also acknowledge:

- Councillor Helen Burnet, Deputy Lord Mayor
- Councillors Jax Fox, Dr Zelinda Sherlock and Marti Zucco
- Mr Vasan Srinivasan, CEO of MHFA
- Mr Jim Goodin, Vice-Chairperson of MHFA

A little over two weeks ago, on Saturday the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, I launched the Annual National Mental Health Month on behalf of the Mental Health Foundation Australia. We are now about halfway through the month and the campaign to raise awareness, identify treatment and other options available. During that time, we have seen a number of significant events aligned with the awareness campaign theme: *'Building Resilience: Communities and Connections'*.<sup>1</sup>

From Melbourne to the Northern Territory, in person and with most of the forums and presentations available online, there are events that will appeal to all parts of our diverse community.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mhfa.org.au/cms/national-mental-health-month-2022> accessed 28 Sept 22

Just yesterday on the Domain we had the National Walk for Mental Health, an event replicated throughout all states and territories. Coming up on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October in Launceston, Dr Justin Coulson will be giving a presentation on Positive Strategies for Raising Resilient Kids.

Across Australia, there have been an enormous series of events and, as we are all aware, most events are organised and run by volunteers. To date, some 33 events have been conducted and there are a further 18 planned before the end of the campaign on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October.

I am especially thankful for all of that work as, in Tasmania, a significantly higher proportion of the population are living with long-term mental health conditions when compared to the rest of the nation. About 8.8% of Australians reported in the 2021 Census that they had a long-term condition. In Tasmania, that figure was 11.5%, representing nearly 64,000 people<sup>2</sup>.

National Mental Health Month is therefore a great tool to raise awareness of the prevalence of mental health disorders but also to educate the community about the treatments and support that are available.

So, thank you all for the work that you do raising awareness and supporting mental health initiatives and for being here to mark National Mental Health Month for 2022 in Tasmania. I wish you all the best for the coming series of events planned during this month.

Now, please enjoy the hospitality of Government House while having a look at our magnificent State Rooms. Don and I look forward to speaking with you informally during the afternoon tea.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/6> accessed 28 Sept 22