An Open Letter to All Members of the New South Wales Parliament

We write to express support for any action designed to restore the timely occurrence of the mental health inquiry under the Mental Health Act 2007 (NSW). We believe that an independent inquiry that generally occurs within 7 - 10 days after admission is preferable to the current "third or fourth week of detention" timeframe because:

1. It provides better protection of our patients’ human rights.
2. It is often therapeutic for patients and their families to have the opportunity of an earlier independent hearing.
3. It better reflects the meaning of "as soon as practicable" in the Act.

Signed

Dr Christopher Ryan, Psychiatrist, University of Sydney, on behalf of:

Dr Lois Achimovich, Consultant Psychiatrist; Dr Tanveer Ahmed, Private Psychiatrist; Dr Mariam Alexander, Consultation-Liaison Psychiatrist; Dr Hecham Alhajali, Public Psychiatrist, Cumberland Hospital; Dr Martin Allan, Trainee Psychiatrist; Dr Manish Anand, Public Psychiatrist, Sydney & Coffs Harbour; Dr Josephine Anderson, Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Gavin Angus-Leppan, Psychiatrist, Concord Hospital; Dr Carmelo Aquilina, Staff Specialist Psychogeriatrician and Director, Specialist Mental Health Services for Older People; Dr Karen Arnold, Private Psychiatrist, Sydney Prof Marie-Paule Austin, Perinatal Psychiatrist, University of New South Wales; Dr Nicholas Babidge, Public Hospital Psychiatrist; Dr Catharine Bailey, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist; Dr Jay Bains, Consultant Psychiatrist, SWAHS; Dr Kristen Barrett, Canterbury Community Mental Health; Dr Elsa Bernardi, Public Hospital Psychiatrist; Dr Bhaswati Bhattacharyya, Private and Public Psychiatrist; Dr Annemarie Bickerton, Psychiatrist; Dr Michael Bowden, Psychiatrist; Prof Philip Boyce, Psychiatrist, University of Sydney; Dr Vlasios Brakoulis, Public Hospital Psychiatrist, Penrith; Dr Amanda Bray, Psychiatrist, Cumberland Hospital; Dr John Brennan, Public Psychiatrist; Dr Richard Burek, Public Community Psychiatrist, Dubbo and Armidale; Dr Nicholas Burns, Psychiatrist and Director of Acute Psychiatry, Bloomfield Hospital, Orange; Dr Rhonda Buskell, Consultation-Liaison Psychiatrist, Westmead; Dr Anne Camac, Public Sector Psychiatrist; Dr Ted Cassidy, Private Psychiatrist; Dr Lindsay Carpenter, Staff Specialist Psychiatrist; Prof Vaughan Carr, University of New South Wales; Dr Agnes Chan, Psychiatrist; Dr Raphael Chan, Public Sector Psychiatrist, Orange; Dr Lucy Chapman, Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist; Dr Bruce Chenoweth, Senior Staff Psychiatrist, St George Hospital; Dr Jackie Curtis, Public Hospital Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Matthew Cullen, Psychiatrist; Dr Paul Cullen, Aged Care Psychiatrist; Dr Eleanor Dawson, retired Psychiatrist and former Official Visitor; Dr Greg De Moore, Psychiatrist; Dr Cybele Dey, Advanced Trainee Child, Adolescent and Family Psychiatry; Dr Giennys Dore, Clinical Director, Consultant Psychiatrist; Prof Brian Draper, Psychiatrist, University of New South Wales; Dr Michael Dudley, Adolescent Psychiatrist, Prince of Wales Hospital; Dr Robert Eidus, Private Psychiatrist; Dr Rupert Elliott, Senior Staff Specialist Psychiatrist, Cumberland Hospital; Dr Peter Evans Child and Family Psychiatrist; Dr Annalieze Finnane, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Katie Frankish, Advanced Trainee in Psychiatry; Dr Shuli Futeran, Public Hospital Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Andrew Gerard, Staff Specialist, Psychiatry, St George Hospital; Dr Sara Ghaly, Advanced Trainee in Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry; Dr Graeme Halliday, Senior Staff Specialist Psychogeriatrician, Sydney South West Area Health Service; A/Prof Anthony Harris, Psychiatrist, University of Sydney; Dr Newman Harris, Public Psychiatrist;
Dr Jennifer Harris, Trainee Psychiatrist; Dr Ian Harrison, Public and Private Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr James Hattway, Psychiatrist, Broken Hill; Prof Philippa Hay, Psychiatrist, Oatley; Prof Philip Hazell, Psychiatrist, University of Sydney; Prof Ian Hickie, Psychiatrist, University of Sydney; Dr Greg Hugh, Clinical Director, Mental Health Inpatient Unit Dubbo; Dr Frank Hume, Psychiatrist, Prince of Wales Hospital; Dr Ralf Ilchef, Senior Staff Specialist, Royal North Shore Hospital; Dr Jarret Johnston, VMO Psychiatrist, Mental Health Emergency Care - Rural Access Project (MHEC-RAP), Greater Western Area Health Service; Dr Carolyn Jones, Public Psychiatrist, SSWAHS; Dr Sharon Jones, Public Psychiatrist, Penrith; Dr Lisa Juckes, Psychiatrist St Leonards; A/Prof Stephen Jurd, Director of Postgraduate Training in Psychiatry, Northern Sydney Central Coast Network; Dr Katherine Kelly, Trainee Psychiatrist; Dr Peter Kelly, Public Hospital Psychiatrist, Westmead; Dr Philip Kneebone, Psychiatrist, Broken Hill Health Service; Dr Katherine Knight, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Anthony Korner, Psychiatrist; Dr Anita Kotak, Psychiatrist; Dr Nick Kowalenko, Psychiatrist; Dr Peter Krabman, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Vinay Lakra, Psychiatrist and Medical Director (East Cluster) SAWHS; Prof Tim Lambert, Psychosis Services Psychiatrist; Dr Matthew Large, Psychiatrist; Dr Rhosholen Lenroot, Psychiatrist, University of New South Wales; Dr Tania Leung, Public Psychiatrist, Sydney; Prof Florence Levy, Child & Family Psychiatrist, University of New South Wales; Dr Cait Lonie, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Goulburn Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service; Dr Elizabeth Mackenzie, Public & Private Psychiatrist; Dr Raj Maheshwari, Consultant Psychiatrist, SSSWAHS; Professor Gin Malhi, Psychiatrist, University of Sydney; Dr Sarah Mares, Child & Family Psychiatrist; Dr Jeanette Martin, Psychiatrist; Dr Catherine Mason, Senior Staff Specialist Psychiatrist, Western Sydney; Dr Diana McKay, Public Sector Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Loyola McLean, Public & Private Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Sue Meffner, Psychiatrist; Dr Kristof Mikes-Liu, Public Practice Psychiatrist, Penrith; Dr Anthony Milch, Private Child, Family and Adult Psychiatrist; Dr Peter Morse, Private Psychiatrist; Dr Louise Nash, Psychiatrist, NSW Institute of Psychiatry & Greater Western AHS; Dr Thomas Newlyn, Psychiatrist; Dr Lisa Newling, Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, SAWHS; Dr Faiz Noore, Psychiatrist, Nepean Hospital; Dr Louisa Norrie, Psychiatrist, University of Sydney; Dr Nick O'Connor, Consultant Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Maryanne O'Donnell, Public Sector Psychiatrist; Dr Fran Orr, Rehabilitation and Recovery Unit, Concord Centre for Mental Health; Dr Jason Pace, Psychiatrist SAWHS; Dr Andrew Parkin, Senior Staff Specialist, Sydney West Area Health Service and Conjoint Senior Lecturer, University of Western Sydney; Dr Martyn Patfield, Public Sector Psychiatrist, Orange; Dr Michael Paton, Clinical Director, Area Mental Health Drug and Alcohol; A/Prof Carmelle Peisah, Public Hospital Psychiatrist; A/Prof Leon Petchkovsky, Psychiatrist, Terranora NSW; Dr Margot Phillips, Psychiatrist & Psychotherapist; Dr Christopher Pollock, Clinical Director Mayo Healthcare, Taree; Dr Ursula Ptok, Trainee Psychiatrist; Dr C Quadrio, Psychiatrist; Dr Robert Redwin, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, SSWAHS; Dr Sharon Reutens, Public Hospital Psychiatrist, Sydney; Prof Alan Rosen, Psychiatrist, University of Sydney; Dr Stephen Rosenman, Psychiatrist; Dr Deborah Rozena, Psychiatrist, Private Practice; Prof Janice Russell, University of Sydney; Prof Perminder Sachdev, University of New South Wales; Dr Elizabeth Salgado, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Sydney Children's Hospital Community Centre, Randwick; Dr Grant Sara, Consultant Psychiatrist, Beaches Early Intervention Centre, Brookvale; Dr Alison Saunders, Child & Family Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Tarra Shaw, Psychiatrist, University of Sydney; Dr Michelle Smith, Psychiatrist; Prof John Snowdon, Old Age Psychiatrist, University of Sydney; Dr Ron Spielman, Private Psychiatrist; Dr Ivan Szrzech, Old Age Psychiatrist GWAHS; Dr Jean Starling, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Department of Psychological Medicine, the Children's Hospital at Westmead; Dr Peter Sternhell, Public Sector Psychiatrist; Dr Janine Stevenson, Public Hospital Psychiatrist; Dr Viktoria Sundakov, Staff Specialist SSWAHS and VMO GWAHS and SAWHS; Dr Anne-Marie Swan, Private Psychiatrist; Dr Ming Tan, Private Psychiatrist; Dr Tad Tietze, Public Hospital Emergency Psychiatrist; Dr Toula Tssovolos, Consultant Paediatric Psychiatrist; A/Prof Julian Troler, University of New South Wales; Dr Jane Tubby, Child Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Heather Tucker, Perinatal, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Central Coast; Dr Ramesh Vannitamby, Staff Specialist, Liverpool Hospital; Prof Garry Walter, Psychiatrist, University of Sydney; Dr Anne Wand, Consultation-Liaison Psychiatrist; Dr Felicity Waters, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist; Dr Richard White, Consultant Psychiatrist, Sydney; Dr Yvonne White, Private Psychiatrist; Dr Chanaka Wijeratne, Old Age Psychiatrist, Prince of Wales Hospital; Prof Kay Wilhelm, University of New South Wales; Dr Frances Wilson, Psychiatrist.

These 149 signatories were collected over 10 days. Concerned psychiatrists not only signed on themselves, but also forwarded the letter onto colleagues, who signed and forwarded in turn.