

Tuesday, 30 May, 2023

Ken Wyatt appointed director as Beyond Blue backs Voice to Parliament

Yamatji man and former Liberal MP Ken Wyatt will join Beyond Blue's board.

Beyond Blue Chair Julia Gillard said the appointment coincided with the organisation's launch of its [public position](#) in support of a Yes vote on the Voice to Parliament.

"We welcome Mr Wyatt to Beyond Blue and feel fortunate to have a respected leader of his calibre join our board," Ms Gillard said.

"Mr Wyatt brings deep governance understanding, strong networks, and a deep knowledge about the social and emotional wellbeing of First Nations Peoples, and Beyond Blue will be stronger for his contribution.

"First Nations social and emotional wellbeing has been an important focus for Beyond Blue for many years – we've long supported the Close the Gap campaign and the full implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

"It's in that spirit that Beyond Blue wholeheartedly supports a Voice to Parliament. We hope a Voice will help promote healing, right historic injustices, and enhance First Nations social and emotional wellbeing.

"Racism places people at greater risk of developing depression, anxiety, substance use issues and suicide attempt. [Research](#) indicates that psychological distress increases with the volume of racism that First Nations Peoples are made to endure.

"Recognising the profound harm that racism and discrimination does to mental health, Beyond Blue appeals for calm, informed and respectful debate in the lead up to the Voice referendum."

Mr Wyatt, who is based in Western Australia, said: "I'm delighted to join the Beyond Blue board at this moment in Australia's history, because it is a crucial moment.

"We have a chance to come together and take a step towards positive change for First Nations Peoples, change that is long overdue. I'm looking forward to becoming part of an organisation that has the courage to advocate for what's fair and right.

"Constitutional recognition through a Voice to Parliament is about being seen and heard. Because when we're seen and heard, and when we have a say, we are better off."

Mr Wyatt was appointed as a Beyond Blue Board Director at yesterday's board meeting, along with prominent business figure and former National Mental Health Commissioner Sam Mostyn.

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman said Beyond Blue would benefit from Mr Wyatt's and Ms Mostyn's contributions.

"These two appointments reflect Beyond Blue's commitment to bipartisanship, governance experience, progress and diversity as we advocate for a mental health system that helps all Australians to stay well and receive mental health support before they reach crisis point," Ms Harman said.

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