



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LONG COVID PATIENT ADVOCACY GROUPS AND SUPPORT NETWORKS UNITE TO CONDEMN GOVERNMENT'S INADEQUATE RESPONSE TO LONG COVID INQUIRY

The Australia Long COVID Community Group, in collaboration with Long COVID Support Australia have united in expressing profound disappointment and concern over the government's response to the Long COVID inquiry. They assert that the government's actions thus far fall woefully short in addressing the urgent needs of individuals suffering from Long COVID.

Australia Long Covid Community is the largest Long COVID patient group in Australia with over 4,700 members and conducted a member survey to create a collaborative submission for the inquiry.

Despite the inquiry's clear evidence of the devastating impact of Long COVID on individuals' lives, the government's response fails to adequately acknowledge the gravity of the situation. Long COVID patient groups emphasise that the government's actions to date do not align with the urgency and scale of the Long COVID crisis.

It has been 297 days since the Long COVID inquiry report and recommendations were released, yet there is zero mention of financial support for Long COVID sufferers who are unable to work and do not qualify for existing supports. This leaves them in a state of vulnerability, struggling to make ends meet while contending with the debilitating effects of Long COVID during a cost of living crisis. The lack of financial assistance exacerbates the already dire circumstances faced by patients and their caregivers, pushing them towards desperation and leaving them unable to access appropriate care.

Miquette Abercrombie, a Long COVID patient and the face of a recent Long COVID campaign by the Victorian Department of Health said, "I am a prisoner in my own home, bed bound for 24/7. I am a shell of a person, seen in a negative way, never heard as has just been proven by the disgraceful response from the Long COVID Inquiry".

Patient groups highlight that the government's expert committee acknowledges the only way to avoid Long COVID is to prevent COVID-19 infection in the first place. The committee recommended addressing air quality as a preventive measure to reduce the spread of infections. However, the government only noted this recommendation, leaving the population vulnerable to repeat COVID infections and Long COVID into the future.

Australia Long COVID community group along with Long COVID Support Australia remains committed to working collaboratively with the government to ensure that the voices and needs of Long COVID patients are heard and addressed. They urge the government to take immediate and decisive action to rectify the inadequacies in their response and provide the necessary support for individuals navigating the challenges of Long COVID.

Media

Daniel Biviano | 0424 718 360