



COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE

CCYPD/22/4123

The Hon. Minister Foley
Minister for Health

via email: minister.health@health.vic.gov.au

Dear Minister Foley

Independent Pandemic Management Advisory Committee

I refer to my letter to you of 12 November 2021 regarding the Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (Pandemic Management) Bill 2021 and the recently announced establishment of the Independent Pandemic Management Advisory Committee (the Committee).

I write to ask you to consider supplementing the Committee's membership to include a member specialised in, and focused on, the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

As I have previously detailed and is becoming increasingly accepted, measures taken to manage and respond to the pandemic have had major and disproportionate impacts on children and young people across the various domains of their lives. The impacts on vulnerable children and young people have been especially devastating.

Many of the effects on children and young people were predictable and could have been mitigated with closer attention to the needs of children and young people through the decision-making process. While the last two years presented unprecedented public health situations, it is my strong view that we should learn from experience so far and build consideration of children and young people into future decision-making.

I remain of the view that it is essential that children and young people's needs, interests and experiences are represented on the Committee, and taken into account in the ongoing management of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I note that other Australian jurisdictions have had mechanisms in place to enable children and young people's experiences and needs to be considered in pandemic decision-making. I understand, for instance, that in New South Wales, the Chief Paediatrician was regularly consulted by government.

I ask that you consider appointing an additional member or members to the Committee, to ensure that children and young people's rights, safety and wellbeing are properly represented in the advice and recommendations that the Committee provides to you.

I would be grateful to discuss this issue with you or your office at the earliest opportunity.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liana Buchanan', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Liana Buchanan
Principal Commissioner
21 March 2022

Encl. *Letter from the Commission to The Hon. Martin Foley MP, Minister for Health, 12 November 2021, Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (Pandemic Management) Bill 2021*

CC: [REDACTED]
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