



**Victorian  
Mental Illness  
Awareness Council**

ABN 28 642 080 520 Inc. A10670T

10<sup>th</sup> May 2016

**To Whom It May Concern**

**Re: Mixed Nuts Media and the campaign to reinstate female only psychiatric wards and female mental health services in the community**

Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council support the intention of MNM to promote the use of female only psychiatric wards and female only mental health services in the community. VMIAC completed a report; Zero Tolerance for Sexual Assault: A Safe Admission for Women whereupon it was revealed data gathered from nine Area Mental Health Services that 85% of women felt unsafe during hospital stays, 67% reporting sexual harassment from male patients and 45% experienced sexual assault. 60% had reported the assault to nurses, but 82% indicated that responses were not helpful.

While the level of abuse suffered by women in psychiatric inpatient units would not be tolerated in any other area of health, strategies such as female only corridors, women's lounges and gender-sensitive training have not provided enough of a safety net for women.

MNM have an interest in mental health consumer rights and perspectives. We are pleased to support MNM in their efforts to make psychiatric services a safer place for women to access.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on mobile 0402724165 if you would like further correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Toko', is written over a light purple background.

Maggie Toko

CEO

VMIAC