



Media Release

3 May 2026

Vale the Hon. Rob Knowles AO

Beyond Blue mourns the recent passing of its Deputy Chair, the Honourable Rob Knowles AO, a deeply respected colleague and advocate for better mental health.

Mr Knowles was appointed to the Beyond Blue Board in February 2017 and was Deputy Chair, bringing decades of leadership commitment to improving the mental health and wellbeing of people across Australia.

Beyond Blue Chair, the Hon. Linda Dessau AC CVO, said Mr Knowles was a passionate champion of mental health reform, and a man who led with integrity and humanity.

“Rob cared deeply about reducing the impact of poor mental health and suicide on families and communities, and that was the lens he brought to our Board discussions and decisions,” Ms Dessau said.

“He met every moment with wisdom and expertise built over decades in political and public life, but also the quiet steadiness of his other life as a farmer, father and grandfather – patient, grounded, and unflappable.”

Chief Executive Officer Georgie Harman AO added: “Rob worked tirelessly over many decades to improve outcomes for people affected by mental health issues and suicide, and their supporters. He did so with incisiveness, pragmatism, and compassion.”

“Rob was a gentleman, in every sense of the word. How lucky we are to have known him.”

Mr Knowles served the community with distinction across a long public life. He continued that service through his many Board and advisory roles, including as an inaugural national mental health commissioner and at Beyond Blue, where his leadership and counsel were highly valued.

Beyond Blue extends its heartfelt condolences to Mr Knowles’ wife Carmel, and to his children, grandchildren, extended family and friends.

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About Beyond Blue

Beyond Blue provides mental health information, support and advice to help everyone feel better earlier and stay well. Last year more than 360,000 people contacted Beyond Blue's free, confidential, 24/7 Support Service. Call 1300 22 4636 or visit www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support.