



## MEDIA RELEASE

6 March 2017

Creating a Safe Supportive Environment

### Symposium seeks breakthroughs in psychological and political recognition

A symposium being held in Melbourne on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March is bringing together key thinkers from Central Australia and cultural and political leaders to seek breakthroughs in recognition for Aboriginal people.

Hosted by not-for-profit organisation Creating A Safe Supportive Environment ([CASSE](#)), and featuring Senator Patrick Dodson, the symposium – '[The Day After Tomorrow – A CASSE Symposium on Breakthrough Recognition](#)' - aims to provide a forum for all attendees to contribute to the national conversation around recognition.

[Pamela Nathan](#), a forensic and clinical psychologist, psychoanalytic psychotherapist and Director of CASSE's Aboriginal Australian Relations Program, stated: "In the debate about constitutional recognition and change, the term 'recognition' has become highly politicised and polarising".

"We have lost sight of what it means to be **recognised**. Recognition entails being able to see and know, and to be seen and known. It entails very real life and death struggles."

"If we are not seen, we are a nobody. A lack of recognition heralds a 'nobody's land state of Terra Nullius' – and a nobody state of mind becomes sovereign. Everyone's birthright is to be recognised."

Pat Anderson AO, Alyawarre woman and co-chair of the Referendum Council, [speaking at a meeting in Darwin](#), echoed these thoughts: "We're not recognised, that's the problem, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are almost invisible."

CASSE's ground-breaking community psychoanalytic approach to Aboriginal mental health, which builds on the foundation of recognition, is achieving positive outcomes. [The Men's Tjilirra Movement](#) in the central western desert region of Australia is empowering men and communities to reconnect with their cultural practices in order to reconnect with each other.

Likewise, the CASSE/[CAAC](#) (Central Australian Aboriginal Congress) 'Breakthrough Violence' group program for the prevention and treatment of violence, co-run by [Ken Lechleitner](#) Pangarta through Ingkintja in Alice Springs operates with a similar approach.

Both offer valuable lessons on the power of psychological recognition to transform lives.

CASSE will be drawing on the symposium presentations and discussion to develop a document outlining key issues in relation to recognition, with the aim of presenting this document to leaders at the National Indigenous Constitutional Convention.

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#### Event details:

**What: The Day After Tomorrow – A CASSE Symposium on Breakthrough Recognition**

**When:** Saturday 25 March 2017

**Where:** The Melbourne Brain Centre, Kenneth Myer Building, The University of Melbourne  
30 Royal Parade , Parkville, Victoria

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**CASSE (Creating A Safe Supportive environment)** is a psychological not-for-profit organisation with the vision to change minds in order to save lives. CASSE aims to promote safe, supportive environments through psychoanalytic awareness. We focus on empowering people and communities to understand and

work through their trauma (manifest by suicide, depression, violence, substance usage) by preserving and strengthening cultural life and capacity between the generations in a self-determining way.