Mr Alan Beanland, Chairman, Orygen
Professor Patrick McGorry AO, Executive Director, Orygen
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this morning.

Tony and I are delighted to welcome you to Government House to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Orygen.

I am fortunate in welcoming you here today, to have Tony by my side. Well, I’m always lucky in that regard, but today in particular, given his specific interest in and commitment to youth mental health and well-being, and the work of Orygen.

I know he has had the benefit of touring Orygen in Parkville with Professor McGorry AO, and he was profoundly impressed by the work there, and the staff with whom he spoke.

His interest will be readily apparent to you, as you chat today. And he will also be an enthusiastic ‘tour guide’ for you a little later. Do not miss the chance to understand Government House from the perspective of his informative tour.

We are keen to thank you this morning for your past 25 years of work, shoring up a better future for so many young people- and in turn for our State - by the support and expertise that you have extended to some of our most vulnerable young Victorians.
When I talk of ‘you’, I am talking of the extended Orygen family.

At the vanguard is Executive Director, Professor Patrick McGorry AO. Former Australian of the year....and so much more.

Professor McGorry has been a pioneer in the area of youth mental health, and continues as a respected voice for reform, and as a successful advocate for ways to improve treatments for young people. The success of Orygen, and the organisations and Institutes associated with it, is a testament to his leadership and vision.

May I thank the board of Orygen for continuing to steer the organisation from strength to strength, your Chair, Mr Alan Beanland, and of course the staff - for their expertise in, and dedication to, genuine and generous care for the young people who need their help.

And without the generosity of philanthropists and donors, quite simply, many of those young people could not have been reached.

As judges in criminal and family courts, Tony and I have seen up close the risks when mental health in the young is left untreated. We know that your work with young people from 15 to 24 can be life-changing, and indeed, life-saving.

We hardly need tell those in this room who work with these young people in crisis, that yours’ is high stakes work.

Your achievements in just 25 years have been immense. But what exciting prospects now lie ahead.

Your new building will see the integration of clinical services and research on a scale only previously dreamt about.

The premises will change, but the premise of your work remains the same, if I can put it that way.
That early intervention is key to improved outcomes for young people.

At first, I think much time and energy was probably expended advocating that basic approach. Today, underpinned by a body of clinical experience and research, your approach is understood and supported.

It is sobering to understand that as many as one in four young people will experience a mental illness at some time in their youth. You have helped to ensure that the early assistance, and the right kind of assistance, can reduce the duration and impact of the illness.

It is equally sobering – gratifying too – to understand that you have now expertly treated and nurtured many thousands of Victorians in their twenties, thirties and even forties.

Thank you for the legacy you have left across those 25 years. And thank you for your commitment to young people for the next 25 years and beyond.

Tony and I wish Orygen, and its extended family, a very happy 25th anniversary!