

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Equality
Minister for Creative Industries



Friday, 15 May 2020

CONTINUING REFORM OF VICTORIA'S MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

Victoria's mental health system will receive additional resources, staff and vital programs as more people seek help as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Minister for Mental Health Martin Foley today announced an additional \$19.5 million in funding to deliver essential reform recommendations from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System interim report and to help flatten a potential second curve of mental ill health.

Today's extra funding will address critical workforce shortages, support the continued roll out of suicide prevention programs and help in the continued engagement of Victorians with a lived experience of mental illness.

To address workforce challenges identified by the Royal Commission, the Victorian Government will provide \$6.5 million for extra junior medical staff training rotations in psychiatry and 60 new graduate mental health nurse placements, ensuring we have the trained professionals on the ground to support people, when they need it most.

Another \$4.9 million will go to 24 new Hospital in the Home beds, which will mean more Victorians can access specialist mental health care in their own homes with their support networks around them.

Melbourne Health, in partnership with Orygen, will deliver 15 beds of these beds for young Victorians with existing mental health issues – this innovative program is part of the recommendation to deliver 170 new acute mental health beds in Victoria.

The Government will also expand the state-wide rollout of Hospital Outreach Post-Suicidal after Engagement (HOPE) program, so Victorians across the state have the dedicated services they need to recover and stay well.

To continue the implementation of the Royal Commission's interim findings, critical operational funding is being provided for Mental Health Reform Victoria (MHRV), as they work to engage with Victorians with lived experience in the delivery of the Commission's recommendations.

This investment comes on top of the recent \$59.4 million coronavirus mental health package that will help meet demand as more Victorians reach out for help. The package includes a \$6 million eOrygen platform for young people to access online therapy and additional funding for vital support lines and online mental health resources.

For more information about managing stress and support options, call the Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Services on 1800 512 348 or visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Martin Foley

"Reforming our mental health system in Victoria and nationally is now more important than ever, as more people reach out for help following the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic."

"This is the best chance that all levels of Government will have to not only flatten the next curve of mental ill health – but to build a better system for the long-term that will ultimately save lives."

"In addition to leading on the National Mental Health Pandemic Response Plan, this investment will help us ensure that Victorians have a mental health system they can count on well into the future."