

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Monday, 13 July 2020

SUPPORTING THE MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUNG VICTORIANS

Young people struggling with their mental health during and after the coronavirus pandemic will be able to access targeted, personalised therapy with an innovative new program funded by the Victorian Government.

Premier Daniel Andrews joined Minister for Mental Health Martin Foley today to launch Orygen's new digital mental health platform for young people called MOST – Moderated Online Social Therapy – an online tool which allows young people to access tailored online therapy and peer support, when and where they need it.

While staying at home and limiting physical interaction is vital to slowing the spread of the virus, it can be difficult for people's mental health and wellbeing – particularly for those already experiencing mental health conditions.

The Victorian Government's recent \$59.4 million coronavirus mental health package included \$6 million to fast track the roll out of the program, which is now available for young people in the North and West of Melbourne – who are clients of Orygen – and a full state wide roll out will continue progressively over the next year.

Young people who live in public housing will also be among the first to benefit from this innovative new method of mental health support, with tenants able to be referred directly by their headspace or mental health clinician.

The coronavirus pandemic has increased demand for mental health support across Victoria but has also meant we need to change the way we deliver mental health care.

The MOST program is a ground-breaking service that means young people can get continuous integrated face-to-face care from home. Importantly, the program is designed with, and for young people – and the youth mental health services who provide the very best care for them.

Through the recent coronavirus mental health support package, the Victorian Government has invested more than \$19 million in targeted mental health and psychosocial supports for young people and another \$6.7 million has also expanded online and phone counselling services for Beyond Blue, Lifeline, Kids Helpline and Suicide Line Victoria.

The Victorian Government has also announced a range of wellbeing resources which include simple wellbeing activities, and video tips developed in partnership with the Melbourne Football Club.

Smiling Mind will also produce resources for senior secondary students to support their mental health and wellbeing. Secondary school students can access counselling via a voice call or video conference through the headspace counselling partnership or via their school-based mental health practitioner.

The Victorian Government has also recently invested an additional \$19.5 million in funding to deliver essential reform recommendations from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System interim report, including specialist Youth Hospital in the Home bed-based services.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"We know staying apart is keeping us together – but it can impact our mental health. That's why we're doing everything we can to ensure young Victorians have the support they need now to stay mentally and physically well."

"This new program is such an important step in changing the way we provide mental health services in Victoria and it means our young people can get the long-term care they need to stay happy, healthy and well."

Quote attributable to Minister for Mental Health Martin Foley

"This is an anxious and uncertain time for everyone – investing in people's mental health and wellbeing will not only save lives but is critical to our social and economic recovery after this crisis is over."

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