

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Foley MP**

Minister for the Coordination of Health and Human Services – COVID-19

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services

Minister for Equality



Saturday, 7 November 2020

## NEW WELLBEING PACKAGE FOR OUR HEALTH HEROES

The Victorian Government has released a healthcare worker wellbeing package to support healthcare workers who have been working tirelessly to care for the Victorian community during the coronavirus pandemic.

The Victorian Government established the Healthcare Worker Infection Prevention and Wellbeing Taskforce in August to help support and protect our healthcare workers as they continue to support and protect us.

Developed in consultation with hospitals, clinicians, peak bodies, unions and academics, the \$9.8 million package complements additional measures to reduce healthcare worker infections and increase access to support.

The package includes the development of a healthcare worker wellbeing centre. The centre will identify best practice approaches to supporting staff fatigue and stress management, provide advice and training opportunities, and host resources through a web platform.

The centre will support individual healthcare worker wellbeing, for clinical and non-clinical roles, across acute and community-based settings including hospitals, community health, aged care and primary care settings.

The package will also improve staff rest and recovery areas in health services that enable physical distancing. An additional focus will be to increase access to specialist services and support that is tailored to individuals, teams and organisational needs.

Funding will be provided through a grants process for on the ground psychosocial support, peer training models and programs to support wellbeing in health services and registered community health services.

Targeted support will be provided to identify and respond to family violence experienced by healthcare workers and access will also be expanded for payments for reasonable medical expenses under the *Better mental health provisional payments* pilot.

The pilot is currently available to nurses and midwives who lodge a primary mental health injury worker's compensation claim, and it will include all medical, allied health and health services' support staff including catering, administration and cleaning staff.

This package adds to the Government's announcement in August of PPE spotters in hospitals, spot checks of healthcare services, COVID Aerosol Hot Spot Analysis Study, fit-testing and data analysis of COVID infections that have occurred in hospitals.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

*"Our doctors, nurses, allied health and non-clinical workers do amazing work every hour, every shift and that's why it's vital we look after our health workers who are looking after us."*

*"Our healthcare workers have done a tremendous job supporting each other in more challenging conditions than they have faced before. This additional package will help ensure that they have the supports they need to stay safe and well at work."*

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