

Media Release

The Hon Luke Donnellan MP
Minister for Child Protection
Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers



Thursday, 3 December 2020

NEW WANTIRNA RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITY UNDERWAY

Construction is now underway for the new Wantirna public sector residential aged care facility, bringing the very best care to older people in Melbourne's east, thanks to the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Luke Donnellan today turned the first sod on the \$81.58 million 120-bed state-of-the-art facility.

The four-storey aged care home will cater to the more complex needs of its residents and has been designed to be mobility and dementia-friendly.

It also features a 'pandemic mode' ventilation and airconditioning system, which when needed, will help to contain the spread of infectious airborne particles by exhausting all air externally from an infected space and provide 100 per cent fresh air to isolated areas.

Residents will enjoy a more home-like environment with the dignity and independence of their own private room and ensuite. Thoughtful touches, such as memory boxes with personal items at the entrance of each resident's room, will be important to helping residents feel safe and at home.

The facility will also include a community room, café, sacred space and other common areas designed to encourage social interactions between residents, staff and families and allow for a range of day to day activities.

The architecture of the new facility has been carefully considered and seeks to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of residents and staff. Natural light-filled spaces and views of the Dandenong Ranges have been integrated into the design to increase the sense of connection to the natural environment.

It will be operated and staffed by Eastern Health as part of the Wantirna Health Precinct, with Victoria's legislated nurse-to-resident ratios in public sector residential aged care services ensuring residents will receive the very best care when they need it most.

We've led the way as the first state in Australia to have nurse-to-resident ratios in its public sector residential aged care. These reforms provide an important safeguard for both residents and staff, and ensure older Victorians are receiving the best care possible.

This year we have seen just how important these ratios are - throughout the pandemic, there were just 15 positive cases in Victoria's public aged care, including three residents and no deaths.

The Wantirna Health Precinct is a community-focused neighbourhood facility in Melbourne's eastern suburbs that provides integrated health and wellbeing services for all.

Scheduled for completion by mid-2022, the facility is part of the Labor Government's work in delivering purpose-built residential aged care services and high-quality care for older Victorians.

The Government is making record investments in public sector aged care including a new \$55.57 million 90-bed state-of-the-art aged care facility in Kew and \$27.75 million to support multicultural aged care.

Media contact: Hannah Porter 0418 377 715 | hannah.porter@minstaff.vic.gov.au

In addition, the *Victorian Budget 2020/21* invested \$175 million to ensure our older Victorians have a safe and comfortable home, where they know they'll be cared for. This includes \$900,000 to deliver the first phase of designing and planning a new 90-bed residential aged care facility in Coburg in Melbourne's northern suburbs.

More than \$27.6 million has also been allocated for public sector residential aged care, to help ensure older Victorians in state-run facilities are properly supported and cared for.

The Government's work to keep Victorians of all generations connected during the pandemic and beyond will continue, and a further \$1.9 million will support several important initiatives to prevent and respond to elder abuse.

For more information about the Wantirna residential aged care facility visit vhhsba.vic.gov.au/health-infrastructure/wantirna-residential-aged-care

Quotes attributable to Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Luke Donnellan

"This purpose-built facility will ensure older Victorians receive the care they deserve, in a comfortable environment that feels like home."

"Being within the Wantirna Health Precinct means residents will also be able to quickly and easily access health services if needed."

Quote attributable to Member for Bayswater Jackson Taylor

"I'm pleased to see this facility move one step closer to becoming a reality for our community to help people access quality public aged care in their own backyard."

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Metropolitan Region Sonja Terpstra

"When completed the facility will enable our older community members to live in the comfortable and supportive environment they deserve."