

# Statement

The Hon Dan Andrews MP  
Premier



Tuesday, 2 March 2021

## STATEMENT FROM THE PREMIER

Mental health impacts all of us.

If it's not our own direct experience, it's people we know – people we love. And when someone we love is in pain, we suffer with them.

It's mums overwhelmed, exhausted, and denied the joy of those precious early years in their child's life.

It's older blokes too – those who keep it in, bottle it up, until it's too late.

It's workers – our colleagues and workmates – struggling with the escalating pressures of work, life, money, family.

And heartbreakingly, it's our kids. Parents who have tried and tried to get the right help for their child, only to be ignored or told to 'hang on' because the services just aren't there.

It's husbands, wives, mums, dads, children, neighbours and friends. It's all of us.

And yet the truth is, that suffering just isn't being taken seriously enough. People are either 'not sick enough' for help, or 'too sick' to treat outside a hospital.

These big gaps in the system mean that people are falling between the cracks.

Instead of help early on – we're leaving people until it's too late and they need to be treated in our emergency departments.

And when Victorians and their loved ones look for help, instead they find dead-ends and closed doors.

It's why two years ago, we established this nation's first ever Royal Commission into Mental Health. Today, we receive its final report.

3,195 pages. 12,500 contributions. 65 additional recommendations. And one inescapable truth: we are failing. And it is costing lives.

As a Government, we recognise these profound failures and commit ourselves to implementing every single one of the Commission's recommendations.

These recommendations will serve as our blueprint for delivering the biggest social reform in a generation:

Building our mental health system – from the ground up.

That means building a system that actually provides people the care they need early – before they reach the ED, and in too many cases, before it's too late.

It means giving people a pathway to recovery close to home and in their own community.

It means listening to those who've lived with mental illness and want to use their experience to help others.

It means giving our dedicated mental health professionals real support, real funding and realistic caseloads.

And it means, as a community, in our workplaces and our schools, sharing a responsibility to recognise, respond and help those who are struggling.

None of this work can be achieved overnight. It will take our ongoing action and effort and commitment.

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But our goal is as simple as it is necessary:

Taking mental health out of the 'too hard basket' once and for all – and making sure Victorians can access the care they need, when they need it, wherever they need it.

Lives are counting on it.