

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Acting Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Mental Health



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NEW DESIGNS AND BUILDER FOR 120 NEW MENTAL HEALTH BEDS

The Andrews Labor Government is transforming Victoria's mental health system with 120 new mental health beds across four new acute mental health facilities to support more people when they need it most.

Acting Premier and Minister for Mental Health James Merlino today released designs and announced the builder for the new acute mental health facilities in Epping, Geelong, Parkville and St Albans.

The designs reveal each facility's exteriors, grounds and internal fit-outs, which have been carefully considered to create a safe, welcoming, and healing atmosphere for consumers on their treatment and recovery journey.

The designs have been developed in consultation with carers, clinicians, staff, and consumers with lived experience of the mental health system.

The beds will be spread across Northern Health's Epping campus (30 beds), Barwon Health's McKellar Centre (16 beds), the Royal Melbourne Hospital (22 beds) and Western Health's Sunshine Hospital (52 beds).

The \$492 million investment will be delivered by the Victorian Health Building Authority. It is a response to a key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

Lendlease Building has been appointed head contractor to build the project following a competitive tender process.

Construction will involve a combination of modular solutions and traditional construction and refurbishment, with works set to begin in mid-2021. All four facilities are expected to be operational by 2023.

Once operational, the beds will deliver 43,000 extra days of hospital-based care – meaning an estimated 2,500 more people will be able to get the help they need, when they need it most.

The new facilities will reduce pressure on emergency departments and deliver acute mental health services, including inpatient and community-based care to Victorians experiencing acute mental health issues from contemporary, safe, and high-quality hospital settings.

The Labor Government invested \$868.6 million in the *2020/21 Victorian Budget* to ensure Victorians have the mental health supports they need, closer to home. It's the single largest investment in mental health by any state government and will ensure that Victoria's mental health system is one that Victorians deserve.

Quotes attributable to the Acting Premier and Minister for Mental Health James Merlino

"These new beds will mean more people can get the care they need, when they need it most – and take pressure off our emergency departments."

"We're implementing every recommendation of the Royal Commission – to fix our broken mental health system and save lives."