



The Hon James Merlino MP

Acting Premier

Minister for Mental Health

Thursday, 20 May 2021

LIVED EXPERIENCE AT THE HEART OF OUR MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

Nobody knows our mental health system better than the people who've experienced it firsthand.

And as we begin to build our new mental health system from the ground up, we're putting Victorians with lived experience at the heart of our efforts.

That includes investing \$5 million towards establishing Victoria's very first residential mental health service designed and delivered by people with lived experience.

This service will provide short-term treatment, care and support in a community setting, providing an alternative to acute hospital-based care. Importantly, it will be designed and delivered by a workforce of people with lived experience.

The *Victorian Budget 2021/22* also delivers \$18 million towards a new entity, the Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing.

The Centre will bring together people with lived experience, researchers and clinicians to establish best practice in adult mental health services, including conducting research, sharing knowledge and ensuring the real, lived experience of Victorians is at the heart of our response.

Making sure this encompasses the experiences of Victorians across our state, the Centre will also work with local services and research organisations in rural and regional areas.

More than \$1 million in funding will support the establishment of a new non-government agency, led by people with lived experience, for people with lived experience.

This new agency will be responsible for supporting organisations that work with and employ Victorians with lived experience, including providing accredited training and resources.

A new independent statutory Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission will also be established, with dedicated positions for Commissioners with lived experience. The Commission will hold the Government to account for the performance of the mental health and wellbeing system, ensuring our reform remains on-track.

Our new eight Regional Mental Health and Wellbeing Boards will also include at least one person with lived experience of mental illness and one person with lived experience as a family member or carer.

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

"For too long we haven't listened to those who know our system best. Victorians with lived experience offer a unique – and personal – insight into what works and what doesn't."

"With this Budget, we'll make sure Victorians with lived experience are at the heart of building a new mental health system from the ground up."