

# Media Release

**Ms Mary-Anne Thomas MP**  
Minister for Regional Development  
Minister for Agriculture



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## **BUSH NURSING PROJECT TO SUPPORT REMOTE COMMUNITIES**

A new Bush Nursing pilot project has been launched in Gippsland as the Victorian Government works to improve access to healthcare services for farmers in remote areas.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas today announced \$325,000 for the program, with the Department of Health to deliver the pilot to six Bush Nursing Centres in remote locations.

The project is funded by *Smarter, Safer Farms*, a \$20 million Government initiative to improve safety and skills outcomes for Victorian farmers.

The funding will be used to provide farming communities with the information, tools and resources they need to improve health outcomes and build resilience after several difficult years of drought and bushfires.

The Bush Nursing pilot project will concentrate on supporting farmers who are geographically harder to reach, resulting in lower levels of engagement with health care providers.

The pilot will take place in East Gippsland's high-country, with centres in Dargo, Ensay, Gelantipy District, Swifts Creek, Buchan, and Cann Valley all receiving funding. The centres will deliver additional services while providing primary health, community, clinical, emergency, home-based and referral services.

With a focus on preventative healthcare, each centre will work to identify early risk factors amongst farmers and their families, and local nurses will use their expertise to provide tailored support to the community across a range of services.

Outcomes of the project will guide future health and wellbeing programs for farmers in remote areas of Victoria. More information on the pilot program is available at [agriculture.vic.gov.au](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au).

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas**

*"We know farmers in East Gippsland have faced many challenges – this program will provide opportunities for locals to benefit from more of the services our health system provides."*

*"Improved access to health services and support in remote areas is important to ensuring our agriculture sector continues to thrive."*

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley**

*"Providing more funding for our Bush Nursing Centres acknowledges the critical work that our nurses do for communities in remote locations."*