

# Media Release

**The Hon James Merlino MP**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister for Education  
Minister for Mental Health



Friday, 30 July 2021

## EXPERT FORUM SHAPES VICTORIA'S MENTAL HEALTH WORKFORCE

Experts across Victoria's mental health sector have been invited to have their say on how the state will develop a sustainable and diverse workforce to support the rebuild of the mental health system at a key online forum.

Minister for Mental Health James Merlino today welcomed attendees to the Mental Health Workforce Strategy Forum, championing the efforts of the mental health workforce and emphasising the crucial role the sector plays in helping shape the future workforce of Victoria's mental health system.

More than 100 representatives from clinical and community workforces, mental health representatives and peak bodies joined the forum to discuss ideas, innovation and solutions in addressing workforce challenges relating to wellbeing, supply, capability, and rural and regional issues.

The forum is part of a direct response to the report of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, which recommended a statewide Mental Health Workforce Strategy be delivered by the end of 2021.

The strategy will provide a roadmap of workforce recommendations and initiatives to be implemented as part of the 10-year reform journey in rebuilding the state's broken mental health system from the ground up.

The strategy's development will be guided by a special committee and chaired by Lyn Morgain, CEO of Oxfam Australia, who brings exceptional leadership to this important work from a background in community health and the NGO sector.

The workforce strategy forum is the start of an ongoing conversation between the Andrews Labor Government and diverse sector stakeholders in working together to create a system that will nurture, grow and support the mental health workforce so that every Victorian gets the care they deserve.

The *Victorian Budget 2021/22* invested a record \$3.8 billion in mental health and wellbeing services and support, including \$206 million towards initial investment in workforce supports.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health James Merlino

*"Our mental health workforce is critical to delivering high quality mental health treatment, care and support to Victorians – without their care and dedication, the system would not operate."*

*"The leadership of Lyn Morgain will be invaluable in helping shape the Mental Health Workforce Strategy to meet the needs of dedicated workers and the Victorians who seek their treatment, support and care."*

### Quote attributable to Mental Health Workforce Strategy Chairperson Lyn Morgain

*"Having a statewide strategy for our mental health workforce is one way we will ensure quality care and support is delivered everywhere for all Victorians"*