

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Education

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers



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BUILDING THE ENGINE ROOM OF OUR NEW MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

The Victorian Government has today introduced legislation which will lay the foundations to build a new mental health facility following a key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

The Royal Commission's interim report recommended the establishment of the *Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing* (the *Collaborative Centre*) – embodying a new approach to mental health and characterised by collaboration, responsiveness and continuous improvement.

The *Collaborative Centre* will be the engine room for the transformed mental health and wellbeing system – bringing together people with lived experience, researchers and clinicians to establish best practice in mental health and wellbeing services.

Located in Melbourne, this purpose-built facility will be the first of its kind in Australia – conducting research and providing a full suite of mental health services to adults and older adults, helping to translate cutting-edge research into real system improvement.

Think of it as like the *Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre* – a world-leading treatment and research facility in the heart of our city that is breaking new ground in research every day – but for mental health.

The proposed legislation will ensure people with lived experience of mental illness or psychological distress are represented at every level of the *Collaborative Centre*, including on its Governance Board, as part of an innovative co-director model of executive leadership.

The *Victorian Budget 2021/22* allocated \$3.8 million to establish the *Collaborative Centre* – building on funding of \$2.2 million in the *Victorian Budget 2020/21* to commence early planning, including the examination of exemplar collaborative centres around both Australia and the world.

A record \$3.8 billion was allocated in the *Victorian Budget 2021/22* to support the start of this critical mental health and wellbeing reform and to support the system now – to ensure struggling Victorians get the treatment and care they need, when they need it.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health James Merlino

"We're building a new, more responsive, compassionate and connected mental health system for all Victorians and the Collaborative Centre will be at its core."

"This will be a facility for all Victorians and the benefits of its cutting edge research and world-class training will flow on to everyone across the state."