

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Wednesday, 17 November 2021

MORE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR YOUNG VICTORIANS

The Andrews Labor Government will more than double the capacity of Victoria's Youth Prevention and Recovery Care (YPARC) network, giving more young Victorians access to the mental health services they need closer to home.

In a major boost for mental health services designed to support young people – particularly those across regional Victoria – Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Mental Health James Merlino today announced the locations of a further five centres to be built across the state.

The new centres will support more than 900 extra young Victorians each year to get the tailored support they need in a crisis – more than doubling capacity of the state's current YPARC network.

An investment of \$141 million in the *Victorian Budget 2021/22* will see new 10-bed residential facilities built in Ballarat, Geelong, Shepparton, Heidelberg and Traralgon – as well as existing YPARCs in Bendigo, Dandenong and Frankston completely refurbished and modernised.

The five new facilities will be operated by Austin Health (Heidelberg), Barwon Health (Geelong), Goulburn Valley Health (Shepparton), Grampians Health (Ballarat), and Latrobe Regional Hospital (Traralgon).

A key recommendation of immediate priority from the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health system*, YPARC services provide around-the-clock clinical care on a short-to-medium term basis for people aged 16 to 25.

The sites reduce pressure on hospital beds by providing early intervention care and an alternative to hospital admission with recovery-focused treatment.

The facilities will be designed by NTC Architects to create a welcoming and home-like environment with private bedrooms and ensuite bathrooms.

Communal kitchens, dining and living areas, breakout spaces and an outdoor garden will also encourage rest and recovery – as well as support family visits for people during their recovery.

Delivered by the Victorian Health Building Authority, construction of the five new facilities and refurbishment of the three existing YPARC centres will support around 400 local jobs right across the state, with all projects to begin construction next year, and be completed by late 2023.

The YPARC facilities follow the adult Prevention and Recovery Care (PARC) facility model, providing tailored support for young Victorians to match the 22 adult PARCs across Victoria delivering the early intervention support people need to recover quickly in a home-like environment, providing an alternative to inpatient hospital admission.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"We're not wasting a moment delivering the Royal Commission's key recommendations – and we're giving young Victorians across the state support and care when they need it the most."

Quote attributable to Minister for Mental Health James Merlino

"We know how much better people's health outcomes are when they get treatment and care close to their family, support networks and local community – so we're delivering youth mental health facilities right across Victoria."

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