

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Education

Minister for Mental Health



Thursday, 9 December 2021

MORE SUPPORT AND RELIEF FOR MENTAL HEALTH CARERS

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting the selfless Victorians who care for a loved one with mental illness or in psychological distress, with a funding boost for mental health carers.

Minister for Mental Health James Merlino today announced the Labor Government is investing \$16.8 million to help Victorian carers, either financially or with relief and respite from their caring roles.

The support includes \$8.8 million for the Mental Health Carer Support Fund to help more carers pay for expenses related to their caring role and support their own health – whether it’s respite from their caring responsibilities, food and bills for their own family, or supporting their personal wellbeing through exercise or counselling.

Victoria’s peak body for mental health carers, families and supporters – Tandem - will continue to be funded to administer the Carer Support Fund on the Government’s behalf.

The carers package also includes \$8 million which will go directly to Tandem, helping to expand its successful programs and activities and deliver more support and advocacy for Victorians caring for a loved one with mental illness.

Tandem will also continue to manage the Mental Health Carer Participation Register, which supports mental health carers to use their lived experience and knowledge of the mental health system to co-design services in partnership with the Labor Government.

The investment will also support greater engagement with a diverse range of families, carers and supporters to ensure they can contribute to the design of services that will support them and their loved ones.

The *Victorian Budget 2021/22* invested a record \$3.8 billion in mental health and wellbeing services and support, including \$92.6 million to provide dedicated help for families and carers.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health James Merlino

“Mental health carers are quiet, often unsung heroes in our community – and it’s only right that we give back to them, whether that’s time for themselves or extra support to put food on the table for their own families.”

“This investment will make sure Tandem can continue its invaluable work supporting and advocating for those who care for people with mental health concerns.”