

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



Thursday, 24 February 2022

DELIVERING BETTER HEALTHCARE FOR MOUNT ALEXANDER SHIRE

Mount Alexander Shire residents will benefit from better integrated healthcare following a voluntary amalgamation of the local health services.

Minister for Health Martin Foley approved the voluntary amalgamation proposal put forward by the Boards of Castlemaine Health and the Maldon Hospital after being satisfied that it would deliver clear benefits to the community.

To be named Dhelkaya Health – meaning ‘Good/Being Healthy’ - the organisation will commence on March 1 and comes after extensive community and staff consultation across both health services and communities and will formalise the existing strong 42-year partnership between both services.

Under the Health Services Act, the Department Secretary must consider amalgamation proposals put forward by health services and be satisfied that the proposal will deliver better health services for the local communities.

There are also clear thresholds that must be considered including – no reduction in service delivery, continued security of employment for the existing workforce, extensive stakeholder engagement and due diligence.

A new board of directors has been appointed with both health services represented on the new board ensuring strong local representation.

The voluntary amalgamation follows the merger of Castlemaine Health and Castlemaine District Community Health (commonly known as CHIRP) last year delivering greater integration of health and community-based services across Mount Alexander Shire.

The voluntary amalgamation is expected to strengthen both health services ability to hire, train and retain staff and provide more services to residents including physiotherapy, podiatry and dietetics.

Sue Race, current Chief Executive Officer for both Castlemaine Health and Maldon Hospital will continue in her role as CEO for Dhelkaya Health.

The community, staff and residents can expect the same excellent care they have always received, with local teams focusing on the needs of patients and residents at each health service.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

“The creation of Dhelkaya Health will provide a strong, integrated health service to benefit the health and wellbeing of all Mount Alexander Shire residents.”

“The community has been involved every step of the way – everyone involved can be proud of what Dhelkaya Health brings for the future.”

“This voluntary amalgamation ticks all the boxes of better integrated services, better health outcomes, improved access and improved career paths for our regional healthcare staff.”

Media contact: Harry Adam 0448 505 875 | harry.adam@minstaff.vic.gov.au