

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Wednesday, 2 March 2022

ONE YEAR ON: HUGE PROGRESS ON MENTAL HEALTH REFORM

One year after the historic delivery of the final report from the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*, the Andrews Labor Government has made huge inroads into the landmark reform of the state's mental health and wellbeing services, with work underway on more than 85 per cent of the 74 recommendations.

The Royal Commission's 2021 report outlined a 10-year blueprint Victoria's future mental health and wellbeing services, building a system where every Victorian gets the timely, tailored support they need – close to home.

Progress has already been made on 65 of 74 recommendations, backed by the Labor Government's record \$3.8 billion investment in the *Victorian Budget 2021/22* – the largest single investment in mental health in Australia's history.

Already, this work has delivered almost 1,000 extra jobs in the mental health workforce. It has expanded the Hospital Outreach Post-Suicidal Engagement Service and established the Mental Health Levy so Victoria's biggest, most profitable businesses to play their part in building the state's new wellbeing systems.

To mark the anniversary of the historic final report, Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Mental Health James Merlino today turned the first sod on Victoria's first Child and Family Centre – a key Royal Commission recommendation.

The new 12-bed facility in Grieve Street, Macleod, will provide specialised mental health care and wellbeing services to children under 11 in an environment that allows them to stay with, and be supported by, their families.

Set to open early next year, and delivered in partnership with Austin Health, the new facility will be staffed 24/7 – responding to the Royal Commission's recommendations to provide more tailored models of care.

The Labor Government today also announced the locations for the next 21 Local Adult and Older Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing Services – a brand-new model of care that will see Victorians get the mental health support they need, as soon as they need it, close to home.

The local services will act as a 'front door' to the reformed mental health system, providing early intervention support for adults experiencing mental illness or psychological distress without needing a referral from a GP, and before people need clinical hospital emergency department.

Set to open from mid-2023, these additional 21 local centres will service key priority areas for support across metropolitan, outer-suburban and regional centres:

- Dandenong
- Mildura
- Echuca
- Melbourne
- Ballarat
- Ringwood
- Warrnambool
- Shepparton
- Lilydale
- Orbost
- Werribee
- Craigieburn
- Horsham
- Hamilton
- Melton
- Bendigo
- Bairnsdale
- Truganina
- Sunbury
- Ararat
- Portland

This builds on the six services previously announced and already preparing to open their doors and start providing care in 2022: Benalla, Latrobe Valley, Frankston, Brimbank, Whittlesea and Greater Geelong.

Media contact: Jamila Fontana 0409 741 279 | jamila.fontana@minstaff.vic.gov.au

By the end of 2026, up to 60 local services will open across the state – connecting Victorians to the care they need in their own communities.

Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

“The Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System was a watershed moment in our state’s history – and we’re not wasting a single moment delivering its recommendations.”

“We said we’d build a mental health system from the ground up to deliver the care every Victorian deserves – and that’s exactly what we’re doing.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Mental Health James Merlino

“Today’s announcements will deliver new services that are sorely needed, with ‘front doors’ to the mental health system to make sure nobody faces barriers to getting support, no matter where they live.”