

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Education

Minister for Mental Health



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STRENGTHENING OUR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting more Victorians through their mental health and drug and alcohol recovery journeys, upgrading vital services to get more people the care they need, when they need it.

Minister for Mental Health James Merlino and Minister for Health Martin Foley today announced 31 Victorian mental healthcare and alcohol and drug services will share in \$20 million from the *Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Facility Renewal Fund*.

Established in 2016 as part of the Labor Government's work to improve access for Victorians to quality mental health, alcohol and drug treatment, the Fund will deliver 45 projects across the state including upgraded telehealth infrastructure, facility expansions, new clinical areas, waiting rooms and building refurbishment works.

Projects include Albury Wodonga Health, which will see \$997,400 to renovate resident accommodation buildings. Funding will deliver new activity and communal spaces, purpose built for both quiet one-on-one assessment, intervention and group activities.

The Living Room Primary Health Service in Melbourne is receiving \$500,000 to refurbish the facility's triage, clinical and drop in areas and alcohol and other drug counselling and therapeutic rooms.

In Warrnambool, \$124,500 is being invested to expand group work rooms and add a resource library at the Western Region Alcohol and Drug Centre.

To date, the program has funded more than 100 infrastructure and improvement projects at mental health and alcohol and other drug care facilities across the state.

These vital upgrades are just one part of the Labor Government's response to the recommendations from the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System* to reform, modernise, build service capacity and provide better models of care for Victorians experiencing mental ill health.

The *Victorian Budget 2021/22* delivered a record \$3.8 billion to support mental health and wellbeing – the largest investment in the history of the state, and this year's Budget built on that unprecedented investment with an extra \$1.3 million to continue to work of rebuilding Victoria's mental health system.

Quote attributable to Minister for Mental Health James Merlino

"We're investing more than ever to improve access to mental health and wellbeing care, because we know just how important it is that people get the support they need, as soon as they need it – close to their homes and existing support networks."

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"Through initiatives like this, we're ensuring more Victorians experiencing mental health concerns or alcohol and drug addiction can access the care and treatment they need."