

Media Release

Gabrielle Williams MP

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Treaty and First Peoples



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NEW ROYAL MELBOURNE MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY TAKING SHAPE

Hundreds of Victorians will get the mental health support and treatment they need, with works on an expanded and transformed mental health facility at The Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH) getting underway.

Minister for Mental Health Gabrielle Williams today announced after the relocation of existing services, construction has started on a new 22-bed mental health facility which will support hundreds of construction jobs, thanks to the Andrews Labor Government.

Delivering on a key recommendation of the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*, the facility has been designed in consultation with people with lived experience of the mental health system, including consumers, carers, clinicians and staff.

The Royal Commission recommended 135 more mental health beds be delivered in health services across the state. The Labor Government is delivering 144, investing \$492 million to future-proof the mental health system as the state continues to grow.

The RMH facility will help an extra 488 Victorians get the acute care they need each year, while the total 144 beds across to the state – to be located at Barwon Health in Geelong, the Northern Hospital in Epping, Sunshine Hospital and part of the *Hospital in the Home* program – will support 2,500 more Victorians every year.

The new facility will increase capacity and reduce pressure on the hospital's busy emergency department – giving people experiencing mental illness access to immediate treatment in a modern, safe and high-quality setting.

The project is supporting 237 construction jobs, while work on the other new facilities across the state is creating and sustaining more than 1,450 jobs.

The new 16-bed mental health facility at Barwon Health's McKellar Centre in Geelong is almost complete, while the Northern and Sunshine Hospital facilities are on track for completion in December 2022 and by mid-2023 respectively.

This year's budget delivered \$1.3 billion in further support for the state's mental health system, building on the Government's record \$3.8 billion investment in the *Victorian Budget 2021/22*.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Gabrielle Williams

"We know our mental health system needs to grow to care for every Victorian who needs it. That's why we're not wasting a moment in delivering the Royal Commission's recommendations – because lives depend on it."

"More mental health beds at the Royal Melbourne Hospital will mean more Victorians can access the care and treatment they need, while also freeing up doctors and nurses to care for other patients."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Metropolitan Region Sheena Watt

"We know our mental health system needs to be expanded and we're getting on with delivering more support and more beds to people so they get the specialist care they need, close to home."

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