

Media Release

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Minister for Mental Health
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SCHOLARSHIP BOOST FOR MENTAL HEALTH WORKFORCE

Applications for hundreds of mental health and wellbeing workforce scholarships and grants are now open as vital work continues to build a diverse and robust mental health and wellbeing workforce.

The Andrews Labor Government is offering 360 scholarships and grants to train and upskill mental health nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, psychologists, alcohol and other drug (AOD) practitioners and lived and living experience workers as part of a \$6 million investment.

Scholarships are available for postgraduate courses in mental health nursing, postgraduate allied health and AOD courses, as well as for lived and living experience university courses. Grants are also available for psychiatric state enrolled nurses undertaking clinical placement.

Victoria's reformed mental health and wellbeing system relies on the hard work of our workers – without them, the system cannot deliver the care and support that Victorians deserve.

Delivering on workforce recommendations of the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*, these scholarships and grants will help attract, train and support a diverse, multidisciplinary mental health and wellbeing workforce.

Victoria's *Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Strategy 2021-2024*, released last year, sets out a vision to ensure the Labor Government is growing, retaining and supporting the mental health workforce – backed by record investment in services across the state.

The Government is also boosting the mental health and wellbeing workforce with lived Experience grants, the Regional and Rural Mental Health Workforce incentive scheme, scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing workers and the Certificate IV in Mental Health Free TAFE program.

The *Victorian Budget 2022/23* included a record \$372 million in workforce initiatives to hire more than 1,500 mental health workers, including 400 mental health nurses and 100 psychiatrists to deliver Victoria's mental health reform agenda.

Scholarship applications are now open for semester one 2023. For more information, visit: www.acn.edu.au/scholarships.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Gabrielle Williams

"Now is the perfect time to develop your career in the mental health system and we're making sure students get the support they need to help Victorians and change lives."

"Our mental health system can't help anyone unless we have the dedicated workforce to support it and that's why we're undertaking a massive workforce expansion."

"The Royal Commission told us we need to boost our workforce to successfully deliver the huge reforms we are implementing – these scholarships will help students become world-class mental health clinicians and supporters."

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