

Media Release

Mr Colin Brooks MP

Minister for Child Protection and Family Services

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers

Acting Minister for Mental Health

Acting Minister for Treaty and First Peoples



Thursday, 20 October 2022

STRENGTHENING MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN THE COMMUNITY

The Andrews Labor Government is establishing new support networks across the state to help Victorians build connections in their local communities and help their mental health and wellbeing.

Acting Minister for Mental Health Colin Brooks today announced the first five *Social Inclusion Action Groups* (SIAGs) will be established in Frankston, Benalla, Mansfield, Wangaratta and Latrobe over the next year.

The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System recognised that communities are best placed to understand and drive local social connection and inclusion that supports mental health and wellbeing.

In response to Royal Commission's recommendations, the Labor Government has invested \$9 million over four years to establish the first 10 SIAGs with the next five groups to be set up in 2024 and 2025.

The groups will see community members and leaders across local government areas working together to deliver initiatives and activities that boost social inclusion and connection, developed by locals who know their communities.

They'll be made up of a diverse range of community members and local leaders of all ages and backgrounds, including people with lived experience, Aboriginal people and those from LGBTIQ+, disability and culturally diverse communities.

Victoria's mental health and wellbeing system is being built from the ground up to support all Victorians. The *Victorian Budget 2022/23* delivered more than \$1.3 billion to continue the work to transform the system so it supports any Victorian who needs it, building on last year's record \$3.8 billion investment.

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Mental Health Colin Brooks

"The Royal Commission recognised that communities are best placed to understand and drive local social connection and inclusion that supports mental health and wellbeing."

"We're supporting more people to feel connected to their community, with programs developed by locals who know their communities."

Quote attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Mental Health and Social Inclusion Tim Richardson

"We encourage community members and leaders across local government areas to work together to deliver these important initiatives that will play an important role in our new Mental Health and Wellbeing System."