

Media Release

The Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers
Minister for Child Protection and Family Services
Acting Minister for Mental Health
Acting Minister for Ambulance Services
Acting Minister for Treaty and First Peoples



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SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH FAMILIES AND CARERS

The Andrews Labor Government is getting on and delivering every recommendation of the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System* – with eight new Family and Carer-led Centres opening across the state this year.

Supporting the families and carers of people experiencing mental health challenges the eight new centres across Victoria will be led by people with lived experience and provide tailored help, connect them to the right information and services, and provided access to hardship funds.

The Labor Government today announced the providers of the \$54.5 million investment that delivers on a key recommendation to establish lived experience-led centres to support families, carers and loved ones of those experiencing mental health challenges.

There are currently more than 60,000 Victorians providing mental health care to family and loved ones, often going unpaid and without support which brings its own challenges and if often a long-term responsibility and these new Centres will provide families and carers with the support network they deserve.

The Centres will provide a warm and welcoming space easily accessible and freely available to families, carers and supporters of all ages, with no need for a referral.

The selected providers for the new Family and Carer-led Centres are*:

- Gippsland: Wellways Australia
- Hume: Gateway Health
- Loddon Mallee: Mind Australia
- South Western: Wellways Australia
- South East (metro): Star Health
- North East (metro): Access Health and Community
- Western (metro): Jesuit Social Services

The Centres will be co-designed and co-led by families, carers and supporters, in partnership with peak body Tandem - a trusted voice for carers, families and supporters in mental health, Tandem worked across Victoria with people with lived and living experience of supporting a loved one to develop the Centres' service delivery model.

The Centres are part of a \$93 million investment to support and promote the leadership of families and carers in mental health. This investment builds on the \$1.3 billion delivered for mental health and wellbeing in the *Victorian Budget 2022/23* to rebuild the mental health system.

Work is underway on implementing more than 90 per cent of the Royal Commission's recommendations.

*Note that the provider for the Grampians Region Centre is expected to be finalised shortly.

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Mental Health Lizzie Blandthorn

"While supporters, carers and families look after their loved ones, these eight local centres across our state will look after them – reducing burnout and ensuring better care for Victorians experiencing mental health challenges."

"The Royal Commission recognised that family and supporters are an undervalued part of the mental health workforce – these centres will provide accessible support for those at the front line of the system."

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