

Media Release

The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples



Friday, 3 February 2023

SEEKING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROVIDERS

The Andrews Labor Government has opened the call for providers to deliver the next round of Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals, which will be established in seven more locations across the state this year.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals provide Victorians with community-based care, with a focus on prevention and early intervention as the best possible mental health support starts close to home.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals support adults and older adults experiencing mental illness or psychological distress, including those with co-occurring substance use or addiction providing treatment, care and support in their community, and closer to their support networks.

The new services, set to open by the end of the year, will be in:

- Dandenong
- Shepparton
- Melton
- Mildura
- Lilydale
- Bendigo-Echuca
- Orbost-Bairnsdale

These services will add to the first six Local Services that opened late last year, supporting communities in Benalla-Wangaratta-Mansfield, Brimbank, Frankston, Greater Geelong-Queenscliffe, Latrobe, and Whittlesea.

There is no eligibility criteria and no need for a GP referral to access the new services which act as a 'front door' to the mental health and wellbeing system offering welcoming and inclusive spaces, staffed by qualified mental health professionals, including peer support workers to cater for the diverse needs of all communities.

The free Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals deliver on another key recommendation of the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*, with between 50 to 60 new services to be up and running across the state by 2026.

Planning is already underway for future Local Services in Melbourne, Werribee-Truganina, Ballarat, Craigieburn-Sunbury, Ringwood, Horsham-Ararat and Warrnambool-Hamilton-Portland.

The Labor Government is getting on with building a new, compassionate and responsive mental health and wellbeing system that supports Victorians who need it, as soon as they need it, delivered by trusted and experienced providers.

The *Victorian Budget 2022/23* included more than \$1.3 billion to continue the work to reform the mental health and wellbeing system, building on the previous year's record investment of \$3.8 billion.

For more information on the advertised call for submissions visit www.tenders.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Gabrielle Williams

"These new free and accessible services transform the way we deliver treatment, care and support for Victorians experiencing mental illness."

"The Royal Commission told us that too many Victorians find navigating the mental health system too hard – we're removing barriers to getting that care, with services in communities providing care close to home."

Media contact: Alex Sheehy 0420 314 221 | alex.sheehy@minstaff.vic.gov.au