

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Tuesday, 14 February 2023

NEW MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE NORTHERN SUBURBS

The Andrews Labor Government is giving residents in Melbourne's north better access to mental health support with a new state-of-the-art acute mental health facility at the Northern Hospital.

Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Mental Health Gabrielle Williams today announced the completion of the new 30-bed acute mental health facility, one of nine being delivered across the state through the Mental Health Beds Expansion program.

The new facility features treatment and multi-purpose rooms, staff and family lounge, internal courtyards and enclosed garden areas. Opening in the coming months, this facility features 240 modules and will provide almost 11,000 days of care to around 650 people each year.

Designed in consultation with people who have lived experience of the mental health system – including consumers, carers and staff – these new facilities provide a safe and welcoming environment for people experiencing acute mental health concerns.

In addition to providing the mental health support people need, close to home, the project has supported around 450 construction jobs whilst being built.

Responding to a key recommendation from the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*, the facility will reduce pressure on the Northern Hospital's emergency department, delivering inpatient acute mental health services in a contemporary, safe and high-quality hospital setting.

The Mental Health Beds Expansion Program will also deliver new beds at Sunshine Hospital in St Albans and the Royal Melbourne Hospital in Parkville, with a new facility in North Geelong operated by Barwon Health opening last September.

Additional beds will be located in Ballarat, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warrnambool, Footscray, Melton and Frankston.

The Labor Government is progressing more than 90 per cent of the Royal Commission's recommendations and is investing \$801 million towards the delivery of 260 new acute public mental health beds across Victoria.

The *Victorian Budget 2022/23* 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 Premier Daniel Andrews

"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."

"This new facility will allow people in Melbourne's growing northern suburbs to receive the support they need close to their homes, families and support networks."

Quote attributable to Minister for Mental Health Gabrielle Williams

"The new mental health facility at the Northern Hospital will ensure that more people experiencing mental ill health can access timely and first-rate care in their own community."

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