

# Media Release

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



Thursday, 10 August 2023

## NEW COLLABORATIVE CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH A STEP CLOSER

Victorian adults needing mental health support will soon benefit from tailored treatment and care, with the selection of lead partners for the new Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Minister for Mental Health Gabrielle Williams today announced Royal Melbourne Hospital and the University of Melbourne as the lead clinical and academic partners – set to be supported by 20 health and academic institutions, as well as community services focused on Aboriginal health and wellbeing.

Established by the Andrews Labor Government following the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, the centre is the first of its kind in Australia.

Bringing together people with lived experience, researchers, and health professionals to lead critical improvements in the mental health system, the centre will provide treatment, care and support to adults, lead cutting-edge research and serve as the 'engine room' for reform across the sector and its workforce.

The centre's board includes at least four members with lived experience and comprises a dedicated Lived Experience Advisory Panel, ensuring this critical first-hand understanding is at the heart of the centre's work.

It is just one of many reforms the Labor Government has delivered following the Royal Commission, including passing the *Mental Health and Wellbeing Act* and establishing the first six Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals – a free service with no need for a referral, supporting adults experiencing mental illness or psychological distress.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* has invested \$776 million into mental health and alcohol and other drug services, building a responsive and compassionate system for all Victorians no matter where they live.

This funding builds on the more than \$6 billion invested over the past three years, with work now underway on 90 per cent of the Royal Commission's recommendations.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Gabrielle Williams

*"We are transforming how mental health treatment is delivered in Victoria and our chosen partners for the Victorian Collaborative Centre are the best placed to achieve this, especially those with lived experience."*

*"The right support and care can make all the difference to people affected by mental health challenges – we won't stop until we know every Victorian has the care they need and deserve."*

### Quote attributable to Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing Chair Terry Laidler

*"The Victorian Collaborative Centre will bring together people with lived experience, researchers and health professionals to lead critical improvements in the mental health system. The announcement of our lead partners is a key milestone in achieving this objective."*

### Quote attributable to Victorian Collaborative Centre Deputy Chair Maria Katsonis

*"The new centre will be the engine room for reform across the mental health sector and its workforce, with lived experience at the core of everything we do. The appointment of our partners means we're a step closer to getting that critical work underway."*

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