

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



Sunday, 8 October 2023

MORE MENTAL HEALTH BEDS TO SUPPORT MELBOURNE'S WEST

The Allan Labor Government is giving Victorians the mental health care they need closer to home, with the new Sunshine Mental Health and Wellbeing Centre now complete.

Premier Jacinta Allan and Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt today officially opened the Labor Government's new facility at Sunshine Hospital, with the first patients set to be admitted this month.

The *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System* made it clear that Victoria needed more acute, hospital-based mental health beds across the state to give all Victorians the care, treatment and support they deserve.

The new 24/7 centre which features 52 acute hospital-based beds delivers on this key recommendation. The centre is part of the Labor Government's \$801 million *Mental Health Beds Expansion Program*, which is delivering 260 new mental health beds across Victoria.

The new beds will reduce pressure on the Sunshine Hospital emergency department and give Victorians experiencing acute mental illness access to urgent treatment in a specialised, safe, and high-quality setting.

Multidisciplinary care will be provided by psychiatrists, mental health clinicians and nurses for diagnoses like schizophrenia, psychosis, bipolar and severe personality disorders, and severe depression or anxiety.

Designed in consultation with people with lived experience of the mental health system, the facility features sensory rooms, de-escalation rooms, internal courtyards and enclosed garden areas, staff and family lounges, and treatment rooms.

It is estimated the centre will provide more than 18,900 days of care to more than 1,150 more people every year.

Once the statewide *Mental Health Beds Expansion Program* is complete, the new hospital-based beds will provide more than 93,504 days of care, supporting more than 6,500 more Victorians to access vital mental health services every year.

The Labor Government has embarked on the biggest modernisation of a mental health system in Australian history, including a \$6 billion investment to deliver every single recommendation from the Royal Commission.

Quote attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"You should be able to get the mental health care you need, close to home – without leaving your community or local support network. We haven't wasted a minute delivering these facilities, because we know lives depend on it."

Quote attributable to Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt

"This new facility will ensure Victorians with acute mental illness receive the immediate and specialised treatment they need in a therapeutic setting, supporting their path to recovery."

Quote attributable to Member for St Albans Natalie Suleyman

"Having this new, modern, and purpose-built facility at Sunshine Hospital means more people in Melbourne's west can access the treatment they need, closer to home."

Media contact: Nadia Dimattina 0438 701 306 | nadia.dimattina@minstaff.vic.gov.au

Quote attributable to Member for Laverton Sarah Connolly

“As the west continues to grow, the need for purpose-built, modern mental health facilities is as important as other infrastructure – our delivery of this new centre is a positive and critical addition to the broader community.”

Quote attributable to Member for Kororoit Luba Grigorovitch

“Having this facility in the heart of the west is going to make a big difference for people in our community experiencing mental illness – also ensuring their family can be close by to provide support when they need it.”