

Media Release

Ingrid Stitt MP
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Ageing
Minister for Multicultural Affairs



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A FURTHER NINE MENTAL HEALTH LOCALS NOW ONE STEP CLOSER

The Allan Labor Government is on track to deliver another nine Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals across Victoria, ensuring more people have access to walk-in mental health care and support, without the need for a GP referral.

Following the opening of the first six sites in 2022, Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt today announced the providers selected to deliver these critical services for people aged 26 years and over, living with mental health or co-occurring alcohol and other drug concerns.

Acting as a 'front door' to the mental health system and staffed by qualified mental health professionals, the Locals can be found in metropolitan and regional Victoria.

Selected for their experience and expansive sector knowledge, the providers for the next nine sites include:

- **Dandenong** – Mind Australia in partnership with Monash Health, The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture Inc. and Thorne Harbour Health Ltd
- **Shepparton** – Wellways Australia in partnership with APMHA Healthcare Ltd and Goulburn Valley Health
- **Melton** – Mind Australia in partnership with IPC Health, MidWest Area Mental Health Service, Thorne Harbour Health Ltd and Western Health
- **Mildura** – Wellways Australia in partnership with Mallee District Aboriginal Services, Mildura Base Public Hospital and Sunraysia Community Health Services
- **Lilydale** – Wellways Australia in partnership with Eastern Health, Inspiro and Oonah Belonging Place
- **Bendigo and Echuca** – Mind Australia in partnership with Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative, Bendigo Health, Echuca Regional Health, The Salvation Army and Thorne Harbour Health Ltd
- **Orbost and Bairnsdale** – Wellways Australia in partnership with Gippsland Lakes Complete Health and Latrobe Regional Health

Support is delivered in-person, telehealth, and via outreach services and a care plan is then designed to match patient goals and preferences – family, carers and supporters can also be involved pending patient permission.

A flagship reform following the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*, the Labor Government will deliver 50 Local Services across Victoria by the end of 2026.

In the most recent *Victorian Budget 2023/24*, \$67 million was invested to establish another three Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals across the state, with an additional \$10 million to plan for another 20 locations.

Since the Royal Commission handed down its final report, significant progress has been made with work underway to implement more than 90 per cent of recommendations and more than \$6 billion invested in the system over the past three years – the largest investment in mental health in Victoria's history.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt

"The Royal Commission showed us that there can be a number of barriers hindering people's access to the mental health system – that is why the Locals are a critically important 'front door' to getting them the help they need."

"The providers are incredibly experienced, with teams of highly qualified mental health professionals who understand the importance of this initial support in reducing the need for more acute care in the future."

Media contact: Isobel Loschiavo 0431 963 479 | isobel.loschiavo@minstaff.vic.gov.au