

# Media Release

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



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## MORE MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SPECIALISTS

The Allan Labor Government is ensuring mental health professionals have the skills they need to support Victorians living with addiction – awarding 20 scholarships to upskill the workforce and expand access to care.

Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt today announced the successful scholarship recipients will have the chance to study specialist mental health care at the Hamilton Centre – giving them the skills they need to work with people with co-occurring mental health and alcohol and other drug use.

Many people living with co-occurring issues have difficulty accessing care that meets all of their needs – importantly these scholarships are increasing the number of specialists who can provide holistic and integrated care for Victorians.

The Graduate Certificate of Addictive Behaviours scholarships will be delivered online by Monash University from February to November in 2024.

Located across the state, the recipients include people with a variety of experience levels and professions, including nursing, social work, psychology, psychiatry, and occupational therapy.

A key recommendation from the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*, the Hamilton Centre opened in April 2023 to improve outcomes for people living with both mental health and substance use or addiction.

A collaborative network coordinated by Turning Point, the facility's specialised addiction services are delivered by St Vincent's Hospital, Eastern Health, Western Health, Austin Health, and Goulburn Valley Health – playing an important role in guiding best practice in integrated care across metro, rural, and regional Victoria.

To date, the Labor Government has invested more than \$6 billion into Victoria's mental health and wellbeing system to progress towards implementing all recommendations from the Royal Commission, including the roll out of the *Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Strategy 2021-2024*.

The strategy sets out a coordinated approach to building a diverse, multidisciplinary workforce that supports a transformed mental health system and provides the care Victorians need and deserve.

This funding includes \$97.4 million in the *Victorian Budget 2023/24* to grow the mental health and AOD workforce, ensuring an inclusive, safe, and responsive mental health and wellbeing system for all Victorians.

Applications for the next round of scholarships from the Hamilton Centre open in August.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt

*"For too long, many Victorians living with mental health and addiction issues have struggled to get the care they need – by implementing initiatives like this we can give more support to Victorians who need it."*

*"We're creating more training opportunities in order to grow our addiction specialist workforce to support people living with mental illness and addiction."*

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