

Media Release

The Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Children

Minister for Disability



Wednesday, 7 August 2024

SUPPORTING VICTORIAN MUMS WITH BREASTFEEDING EXPERTISE

The Allan Labor Government is making sure new mums who choose to breastfeed their babies are getting the specialised support they need free of charge and close to home.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn marked World Breastfeeding Week with a visit to North Brighton Maternal and Child Health (MCH) service where staff are benefitting from more than \$7,500 in lactation support funding.

Breastfeeding does not always come easily, and it is important for new mums and their babies to have free support readily available to address any difficulties they may be having.

Bayside City Council is using its share of the funding to support a staff member at Highett MCH to recertify as an International Board-Certified Lactation consultant, and support three staff members to undertake professional development.

The council has boosted their dedicated lactation support service, which includes home visits, face-to-face consultations and telehealth appointments – giving new mums the option to access support in a way that suits them.

As part of the *More Support for Mums, Dads and Babies* initiative in \$4 million has been invested over four years to increase lactation support across the state.

The *Victorian Budget 2024/25* also invested \$28.8 million over three years to meet increased demand for universally delivered MCH services, dedicated Aboriginal services and the enhanced MCH program which provides extra support for families facing challenges such as disability, mental health, family violence and housing instability.

Parents will also be able to call a qualified MCH nurse at the 24/7 MCH line to discuss any concerns about their child's health and nutrition, breastfeeding or parenting issues – with over 100,000 callers benefiting from this support every year.

Quotes attributable to Victorian Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn:

"We're supporting women however they choose to feed their babies - we know women experience many barriers to successful breastfeeding but a lack of support should not be one of them."

"This funding is not only providing additional breastfeeding support at no cost to parents – it is also supporting more midwives and nurses to undertake breastfeeding training and gain formal lactation consultant qualifications."

Quote attributable to Member for Southern Metropolitan Ryan Batchelor

"This initiative is giving mums, dads and caregivers better access to evidence-based breastfeeding support and care to make informed decisions on what's best for their babies."