

Media Release

Ingrid Stitt MP

Special Minister of State
Minister for Government Services
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Ageing
Minister for Multicultural and Multifaith Victoria



Wednesday, 27 May 2026

FREE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR MELBOURNE'S SOUTH EAST

The Allan Labor Government is making it easier for locals in Melbourne's south east to access free mental health care, closer to home.

Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt today opened the Cardinia Mental Health and Wellbeing Local, located in Pakenham and Cockatoo.

The free service is now delivering tailored support in-person at the two locations and via telehealth.

It is part of a statewide network of 22 Locals providing care to adults experiencing mental illness or psychological distress across 24 locations throughout Victoria.

Accessing care is simple – you don't need a Medicare card or GP referral and services are completely free.

Locals act as a 'front door' to the system making them an important tool in early intervention.

The network of Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals has already helped more than 41,000 Victorians.

Care is delivered by a multidisciplinary team of experienced mental health professionals, wellbeing staff and peer support workers.

The network is a flagship initiative by the Labor Government in response to the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*.

Services at the Cardinia Mental Health and Wellbeing Local are delivered by Mind Australia in partnership with Monash Health.

The service operates at 16 Station Street, Pakenham and from Eastern Dandenong Ranges Association at 7-17 McBride Street, Cockatoo.

Appointments are available at the Pakenham site from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm and the Cockatoo Site, Monday and Wednesday 9am to 5pm.

More information and contact details are available at betterhealth.vic.gov.au/mental-health-wellbeing-locals.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt

"More than 41,000 Victorians have already accessed free support through our Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals."

"We've delivered Locals just like this one right across Victoria – so more people can access the care they need."

Quote attributable to Member for Pakenham Emma Vulin

"The Cardinia Mental Health and Wellbeing Local will mean our community can access even more care, closer to home."

Quotes attributable to Member for Monbulk Daniela De Martino

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“It’s fantastic to see these new spaces now open – our community can access incredible support and care here.”

“A site in Cockatoo means that our community in the Hills can get the free support they need, closer to home.”