The Hon Martin Foley MP

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Equality

Monday, 27 May 2019

# BOOST FOR MENTAL HEALTH AS THE ROYAL COMMISSION DOES ITS WORK

The Andrews Labor Government is building on last year’s record mental health investment to give more Victorians experiencing mental illness better treatment and care, closer to home.

The *Victorian Budget 2019/20* delivers the practical support Victorians need now while the landmark Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System continues its enquiry ahead of delivering its interim report in November.

More inpatient beds, more community mental health care and critical support services for asylum seekers are some of the key initiatives announced today as part of a $173 million investment in the Budget.

Around 184,000 Victorians currently experience severe mental illness and nearly half of all Victorians will experience a mental illness at some stage in their lives.

When it comes to mental health, we know how important it is to get the best possible treatment close to home. That’s why the Budget provides $28.7 million over two years to give more than 7,000 people access to earlier care and support through additional clinical mental health services in the community.

The Budget provides $17.5 million to strengthen mental health workforce initiatives and fund programs supporting Aboriginal Victorians with severe mental illness.

Asylum seekers awaiting confirmation of their refugee status will receive $3 million for mental and physical health support, ensuring their basic medication and mental health needs are met – filling the gap left by savage Federal Liberal Government cuts.

The Mental Health Tribunal and the Mental Health Complaints Commissioner perform critical safeguarding roles in our system. The Budget ensure these remain available to protect the rights of Victorians.

Other key Budget investments include:

* $23.3 million for an extra 28 inpatient beds to meet growing demand
* $18.9 million to support mental health clinicians at the Victorian Fixed Threat Assessment Centre and deliver extra specialised services to meet the needs of people referred by the Centre
* $10.2 million for a new 30-bed residential rehabilitation facility in Gippsland
* $6.6 million to increase capacity at three Prevention and Recovery Care (PARC) units to support Victorians in the early phases of recovery through more treatment options and improved clinical care
* $6 million to establish a Centre for Excellence for Emergency Worker Mental Health to provide timely, evidence-based mental health care to emergency service workers
* $17.1 million for the Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System to continue its work.

The Budget also ensures equality remains non-negotiable in Victoria and LGBTIQ communities get the support they deserve.

Members of the LGBTIQ community are far more likely to experience mental health issues – and they deserve our support. The Budget includes $2.5 million for targeted family counselling services over the next four years, and $500,000 for additional mental health support.

The Budget also includes $250,000 to support Victorian survivors of the dodgy and dangerous quackery of so‑called “conversion therapy”.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health and Minister for Equality Martin Foley

***“****We all know and care about someone who has needed mental health support and understand the devastating impact mental illness can have when that support isn’t available.”*

*“We promised to establish the Royal Commission, and that’s exactly what we’ve done. As the Commission continues this vital work, we’re getting on with making the practical changes Victorians need now.”*

*“We’re banning conversion therapy and ensuring LGBTIQ communities get the support they deserve – because in Victoria, equality is non-negotiable.”*