

# Media Release

**Gabrielle Williams MP**  
Minister for Mental Health  
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples



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## MORE SPECIALIST MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

The Andrews Labor Government is giving Victorians seeking treatment for mental health concerns and substance addiction better access to support, partnering with expert providers for the new Statewide Specialist Service.

Minister for Mental Health Gabrielle Williams and Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today announced that Eastern Health, St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne, Western Health and Austin Health (in partnership with Goulburn Valley Health) will run four initial hubs to open across Victoria.

A key recommendation of the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System* – the Labor Government's \$21.5 million investment in the Specialist Statewide Service will ensure people with co-occurring mental illness and substance use issues receive the care they need earlier and closer to home.

Alongside providing specialist treatment and care, the service will also support education and training initiatives for mental health and alcohol and other drugs practitioners, as well as undertake dedicated research into co-occurring mental illness and substance use.

Delivering another key milestone of the Royal Commission, the Service will build the capacity of the mental health system to deliver collaborative, integrated care to people seeking support.

The Statewide Specialist Service will be led and coordinated by Turning Point, Australia's leading addiction treatment and research centre, thanks to a \$13.3 million investment from the Government.

This year, the Government is delivering record investment in the state's mental health and wellbeing system, including more than \$42 million over four years to boost integrated services for Victorians living with co-occurring mental health concerns and addiction or substance abuse issues.

Additional reforms include grants and scholarships for trainee addiction specialists and nurses, and the *Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Facility Renewal Fund* – delivering 45 projects across the state for mental health, alcohol and drug treatment.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Gabrielle Williams

*"People with co-occurring mental health concerns often need unique, tailored care – and we're making sure that's available to every Victorian, with more specialist workers and addiction treatment hubs across the state."*

*"The Royal Commission told us integrated care is vital for Victorians struggling with co-occurring mental illness – the Statewide Specialist Service will support people every step of their recovery journey."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

*"We need to build a better system – one that works for people with co-occurring substance use or addiction and mental illness. A system that ensures people get the world-class treatment and wraparound support they deserve."*