

Media Release

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



Thursday, 23 May 2024

WALK-IN MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT NOW AVAILABLE IN SHEPPARTON

The Allan Labor Government is getting on with the job of building a modern and accessible mental health system for every Victorian – with walk-ins now available at the Shepparton Mental Health and Wellbeing Local.

Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt today announced that locals aged 26 years and older in Victoria’s north can now walk in and get the help they need – it is free, and no Medicare card, GP referral or appointment is required.

The Shepparton service is one of 15 Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals operating across the state, supporting people experiencing mental illness or psychological distress, including those with co-occurring substance use or addiction concerns, providing treatment and care in their community and closer to their support networks.

Offering telehealth since December 2023, the Mental Health and Wellbeing Local in Shepparton is operated by Wellways Australia, in partnership with APMHA Healthcare and Goulburn Valley Health.

A flagship reform following the *Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System*, Locals act as a ‘front door’ to the mental health system, offering a welcoming and inclusive space to access support from qualified mental health professionals, including peer support workers catering to the diverse needs of all communities.

Since the first six began operating in October 2022, the Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals have provided support to more than 6,500 people.

Since the Royal Commission handed down its final report, significant progress has been made with work underway to implement more than 90 per cent of recommendations and more than \$6 billion invested in the system over the past three years – the largest investment in mental health in Victoria’s history.

People in Shepparton and surrounding communities can now access the Mental Health and Wellbeing Local at 151-155 Maude Street, Shepparton for walk-in support, available five days a week. This is in addition to telehealth services also available on weekdays.

For more information, including details for how to access support, please visit betterhealth.vic.gov.au/mhwlocal

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt

“Services like the Shepparton Local are helping transform our mental health system and are the perfect ‘front door’ to getting more Victorians the help they need.”

“We’re making sure Victorians have free, easy to access mental health care closer to home, without the need to jump through hoops like a GP referral or needing a Medicare card.”

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Region Jaclyn Symes

“A walk in service at the Shepparton Local now makes it easier for locals to get that bit of extra care and support when they’re struggling with their mental health in a welcoming and accessible environment.”

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