

Media Release

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



Thursday, 13 June 2024

MORE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

The Allan Labor Government is getting on with re-building Victoria's mental health system – with the Mental Health and Wellbeing Local in Brimbank making seeking care even easier, with services now being offered on weekends.

Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt today announced that as part of the expanded service offering at the Brimbank facility, telehealth appointments are now available on Saturdays and new dual diagnosis & outreach workers will provide support after hours and on Saturdays so people in the community can receive the support they need, when they need it.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals were a key recommendation of the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System*, providing support and treatment for adults aged 26 and older experiencing mental illness or psychological distress in their community, including those with co-occurring substance use or addiction.

The local services act as a 'front door' to the mental health and wellbeing system offering welcoming and inclusive spaces, staffed by qualified mental health professionals including peer support workers to cater for the diverse needs of all communities.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Local in Brimbank delivered by cohealth, is one of 15 Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals across Victoria providing support to local communities through face-to-face appointments, phone calls, telehealth appointments, community engagement activities and outreach.

Since the first six began operating in October 2022, the Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals have provided support to more than 7,500 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.

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

Quotes attributable to Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt

"We are transforming our mental health system, making it easier for more people to seek out responsive and compassionate support – because that is what every Victorian deserves."

"Providing mental health support via telehealth over the weekend will mean people within the Brimbank area can get the support they need when they need it, right in the comfort of their own home."

Quote attributable to Member for Laverton Sarah Connolly

"A new weekend telehealth service will take the stress out of seeking care for many locals who are seeking more flexible care – these extended hours will make a big difference."

Quote attributable to Member for Sydenham Natalie Hutchins

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“Opening up telehealth appointments over the weekend will provide greater access for our community to seek the mental health support they need.”

Quote attributable to Member for St Albans Natalie Suleyman

“Expanding this important service means locals will have access to mental health support when they need it most.”

Quote attributable to cohealth Chief Executive Nicole Bartholomeusz

“We are honoured to be able to continue to work with the people of Brimbank to improve their mental health and wellbeing, walking hand-in-hand with them to ensure the community continues to shape the design and delivery of their Brimbank Local service.”