

Media Release

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



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EXPANDING STREET OUTREACH SERVICES TO REDUCE DRUG HARM

The Allan Labor Government is expanding street outreach services in Melbourne’s CBD and beyond to help Victorians struggling with chronic addiction.

Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt today announced more outreach teams are working across the CBD and cohealth’s successful City Street Health program will also now be expanded to Footscray and St Kilda.

Delivered as part of the Labor Government’s \$95 million Statewide Action Plan, the number of outreach teams working across the CBD as part of City Street Health has doubled – to provide better access to health and social care to those who need it.

These teams provide expert care and support to our CBD’s most vulnerable residents. This includes the tools and information people need to reduce the chance of overdose alongside the provision of first aid, referral to wraparound services and distributing naloxone.

The successful program works alongside local businesses, law enforcement and service providers to inform the best care pathways – while helping keep our CBD streets cleaner and safer for everyone.

But with 90 per cent of all heroin involved overdoses occurring outside the City of Melbourne, more support is also needed for Victoria’s suburbs and regional centres.

That’s why outreach services including two mobile services staffed by a multidisciplinary health team will now operate in Footscray and St Kilda, providing people with the health and social supports they need to improve their wellbeing and find a pathway out of addiction.

The new Footscray outreach service operated by cohealth will commence from 1 September, and the new St Kilda service will commence on 31 October delivered by the Salvation Army. Both services will operate 7 days a week with service hours to adapt to community needs.

Around Victoria, the Statewide Action Plan will also boost access to the life-changing medical treatment pharmacotherapy in up to 30 locations, establish 20 Naloxone vending machines to be trailed alongside existing needle exchanges, and trial Victoria’s first overdose prevention and response helpline.

Quote attributable to Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt

“Victorians struggling with addiction need care and support, not stigma - that’s why we are rolling out more outreach across the CBD and in Footscray and St Kilda.”

Quote attributable to Member for Footscray Katie Hall

“The expansion of the City Street Health program to Footscray will provide people struggling with chronic addiction in our community the care they need while also working with local businesses to improve public amenity.”

Quote attributable to Member for Albert Park Nina Taylor

“Our statewide plan will save lives and these new outreach services in St Kilda will provide significant support to the most vulnerable people in our community.”

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Quote attributable to cohealth Chief Executive Nicole Bartholomeusz

“The launch of the two new mobile services in Footscray and St Kilda will mean critical support can be delivered to where it is needed most across Melbourne’s suburbs, with compassion and expertise.”

Quote attributable to The Salvation Army State Manager AOD Victoria Alex Reynolds

“The Salvation Army welcomes this initiative and the expansion of Harm Reduction Services across the state. This initiative will provide accessible and integrated support to those in the community who need it most.”