

Media Release

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MILESTONE MOMENT FOR THOMAS EMBLING HOSPITAL UPGRADE

Work is progressing on the Allan Labor Government's redevelopment of the Thomas Embling Hospital in Fairfield – with major structural works on the \$515.7 million project now complete.

With more than 600,000 hours worked on stages one and two of the expansion, this milestone paves the way for internal fit-out works to commence.

Once completed, the expansion will provide an additional 82 secure mental health beds, including a 34-bed women's precinct and a 48-bed medium security men's facility, as well as clinical administration facilities, a new entry complex and more car parking.

This expansion will reduce wait times for mental health assessment and treatment and ensure that Victorians most at risk can access mental health services in a secure, contemporary and recovery-focused environment.

The project delivers on a key recommendation from the *Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System* to have co-design at the heart of all new mental health infrastructure, incorporating the knowledge of Victorians with lived experience of mental health concerns, carers, families and clinicians to help shape the planning and design.

During peak construction, the project has created around 750 jobs and more than \$6 million has been invested towards inclusive employment opportunities for people with disabilities through direct engagement and social procurement initiatives.

The project is being delivered by the Victorian Health Building Authority in partnership with Forensicare, John Holland, and Guymer Bailey architects, with the expansion works due for completion in 2025.

Since the Royal Commission, significant progress has been made with work underway to implement more than 90 per cent of its recommendations and more than \$6 billion invested in the system over the past three years.

Quote attributable to the Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt

"This massive expansion project will change the way forensic mental health services are delivered in Victoria – with greater capacity to get consumers the urgent treatment they need, in a safe and recovery-focused environment."

Quote attributable to the Minister for Health Infrastructure Mary-Anne Thomas

"We have put co-design at the heart of this expansion, with the first-hand experiences of Victorians, carers, and clinicians shaping the planning and design of the project."

Quote attributable to the Member for Northcote Kat Theophanous

"This expanded project prioritises women's mental health – ensuring they can get the care they need in a safe and secure facility, as we continue to make significant reform to Victoria's mental health system."