

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Suleyman MP
Minister for Veterans
Minister for Small Business
Minister for Youth



Monday, 14 October 2024

SUPPORTING RSL ACTIVE THIS VETERANS' HEALTH WEEK

Veterans and ex-service members will come together to increase social connections, improve health and mental wellbeing and get active as part of Veterans' Health Week, thanks to support from the Allan Labor Government and RSL Victoria.

Minister for Veterans Natalie Suleyman joined RSL Active athletes at a training session in Wantirna South yesterday, as the all-veteran team prepare to compete at their eights AFL Open National Championships in November.

RSL Active was launched in 2016 and has received more than \$1.2 million in funding from the Labor Government, including \$300,000 this year.

Players on the team include Melanie Kruse who initially joined the Army Reserves as a medic in 2016, and currently works as a paramedic.

Matthew Blunt, an Army veteran with more than two decades of military service and a member of the RSL Active wheelchair AFL team since 2019, will also compete. In last year's National Championships, Matthew was selected in the All-Australian team and recently won a Premiership in the Community VFL team for Collingwood Magpies.

Veterans' Health Week runs from Sunday, 13 October through to Sunday, 20 October, with veterans eligible for free travel across Victoria's vast public transport network for the duration of the week.

RSL Active will deliver a wide range of activities throughout the week, including equine therapy and boxing classes at Ringwood RSL, a dinner and social catch up at Altona RSL and a yoga program at Warragul RSL.

Quote attributable to Minister for Veterans Natalie Suleyman

"RSL Active supports the mental health and wellbeing of Victoria's veterans and their families. It also gives veterans an opportunity to build lifelong friendships, stay active and make social connections."

Quote attributable to Member for the South-Eastern Metropolitan Region Michael Galea

"It's fantastic to see the RSL Active AFL wheelchair team come together, not only for their shared love for the sport but to support one another, build friendships and improve their health – which is what Veterans' Health Week is all about."

Quote attributable to Member for the South-Eastern Metropolitan Region Lee Tarlamis

"I wish the players the best of luck as they prepare to represent our state at the National Championships, and praise them for their determination, strength and teamwork on and off the court."

Quote attributable to RSL Victoria State President Dr Rob Webster OAM

"Veterans' Health Week is an invaluable opportunity for our veteran community to stay active, connected, and supported. This year's theme of 'Keep Connected' is a timely reminder to veterans of all ages to prioritise their own health and wellbeing, as well as that of their families and mates."

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