

## Funding to roll out mental health reforms is timely and welcome

15 May 2020

Mental Health Victoria today welcomed the additional \$19.5 million in funding announced by the State Government to deliver essential reforms from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System interim report and to support rising mental health concerns in the pandemic.

Mental Health Victoria Angus Clelland said COVID-19 has reinforced the fragility of the mental health system in Victoria and nationally and the importance of fast-tracking reform.

“COVID-19 is having and will have a profound impact on the mental wellbeing of Victorians, both from the trauma directly associated with the pandemic and the economic repercussions now unfolding,” he said.

“We welcome the State Government's recognition that now is not the time to park critical reforms until we get through the pandemic. To the contrary, we need to shore up services and supports to face a new wave of demand,” he said.

The latest package of funding and reforms will help address critical workforce shortages, and mean more Victorians can access specialist mental health care in their own homes. It will also expand the statewide rollout of the Hospital Outreach Post-Suicidal after Engagement (HOPE) program.

“Mental health issues can have a devastating impact on individuals and their loved ones, but they also deliver a cost of \$45 billion a year in lost potential to our state's economy,” Mr Clelland said.

“The stakes are very high right now, so we welcome the State Government's continued focus on the mental health of Victorians and the mental health system.”

*For further information or to arrange an interview with Angus Clelland about the latest package or ahead of the expected announcement later today of further mental health reforms from National Cabinet, please call Marie McInerney on 0418 273 698.*