



MEDIA RELEASE

Lives will be saved: Mental Health Victoria welcomes Royal Commission's bold vision for the Victorian mental health system

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Mental Health Victoria welcomes today's public release of the final report of the Royal Commission into Victoria's mental health system.

Mental Health Victoria CEO Angus Clelland said the release of the Royal Commission's final report during an historic joint sitting of both houses of the Victorian Parliament today was the most significant development in mental health since de-institutionalisation in the 1990s. It is the culmination of more than two decades of outstanding advocacy efforts from individuals, carers, families, academics, and mental health professionals from across Victoria.

"Far from just recommending more of the same, the Royal Commission's final report articulates a bold new vision for mental health service design, commissioning, delivery and governance," Mr Clelland said.

"We commend the Royal Commission's focus on removing the barriers Victorians face when trying to get help and emphasis on making services available in the community, particularly in regional Victoria.

"For too long, Victorians have had few options but to present to hospital emergency departments or to suffer in silence. The reforms announced today will change all that," he said.

"The reforms will have a profoundly positive impact on the mental health and wellbeing of hundreds of thousands of Victorians. Undoubtedly, lives will be saved," Mr Clelland said.

"The Royal Commission has set a very high bar for Victoria. Once the reforms have been implemented, the Victorian system will become the national benchmark. We hope that the other states and territories follow Victoria's lead," Mr Clelland said.

"We commend the Victorian Government for calling the Royal Commission, committing to implementing all of its recommendations, and for the large-scale investment it has provided in the interim to help stabilise the system, begin reform activities and respond to the devastating impacts of COVID-19."

"We would like to recognise the Royal Commissioners and staff for their efforts over the past two years. The Commission has demonstrated an outstanding focus on the needs of individuals, carers, families, and communities," he said.

Mr Clelland said that just as people were the focus of the reforms, people will be key to sustaining the new mental health system.



“The reform process will create thousands of new mental health jobs across Victoria and across all mental health disciplines – including peer workers, nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists and community workers. Growing the workforce will be a critical early priority,” he said.

“There is undisputedly a large economic return from investing in mental health in terms of the benefits that flow from supporting people living with mental illness to be safe, well, housed and employed in the community,” he said.

For further information or to arrange an interview with Angus Clelland, please call Clare Callow on 0410 147 988.