

Media release

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Mind Australia manages new Mental Health & Wellbeing Hubs in Victoria

Mind Australia is operating new Mental Health & Wellbeing Hubs across Victoria, making it easier for Victorians to access free and immediate support for mental illness.

The hubs are part of a \$13.3 million Victorian Government commitment to provide Victorians with easier access to mental health support as they continue to navigate through the impacts of the pandemic.

The hubs provide a mix of free face-to-face support, telehealth, mobile outreach and online delivery services.

Mind is proud to be managing hubs in Abbotsford, Bendigo, Wangaratta, Mansfield, Wyndham, Footscray and Wodonga, with work underway setting up hubs in Craigieburn, Traralgon and Wonthaggi.

In-person, mobile outreach support services are also already being delivered across regional areas (Gippsland, Loddon, Campaspe Shires, and North East Victoria), and most of metro Melbourne.

Quotes attributable to Mind Australia CEO Gill Callister PSM

“The pandemic has highlighted the need for easily accessible mental health services to provide people with the support they need when they need it.

“Importantly, these new Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs will not require a referral from a GP or health professional, you do not have to have an appointment and you will not have to pay anything to receive help.

“If you need help, you can reach out and you will get it.

“We know that a local approach is more important than ever after the challenges of the COVID pandemic.

“Mind’s mobile workforce - part of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub initiative – is already out on the ground, providing help wherever it is most effective, whether that’s in homes, in local communities, or in conjunction with local services.”

Quotes attributable to Holly (no surname please) – who accessed Abbotsford Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub services managed by Mind Australia

Background:

- 34 years old.
- From Lalor, VIC.
- *Does not want to be pictured in the media*

“I have spent a year on waitlists and I have exhausted all avenues of getting private care – there’s just nowhere to get into. Within two days of enquiring about the Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs, Lisa, my support worker, reached out to me.

“I was very much in a state of crisis before I accessed this service. I was at a stage where I needed assistance with the most basic of tasks; like getting organised for appointments, taking medication and getting groceries – it was all too much.

“Lisa is an angel. She has been amazing; the practical support she has given me has been fantastic.

“It has been helpful having different support options, and for me it is so easy to do Telehealth. Sometimes going out [in the community] can be overwhelming, especially with COVID, but Lisa has been so supportive and always checks in with me a couple of times a week.”

Quotes attributable to Lisa Williams, lead practitioner at the Abbotsford Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub managed by Mind Australia

“We are able to provide people with an individualised support program and a dedicated mental health practitioner.

“It’s only been a matter of weeks but I already have seen examples of the positive impact of our work. Having someone who can listen and provide psychosocial support can make a world of difference.”

About the Mental Health & Wellbeing Hubs

The Mental Health & Wellbeing Hubs are available to Victorians of all ages who have any mental health or wellbeing concerns.

A wide range of holistic supports for psychological distress or mental health concerns and life stressors are available, including:

- lowered mood
- anxiety
- substance use or addiction (for yourself or those you care about)
- homelessness
- financial difficulties
- loneliness or social isolation.

Support workers will assess a person’s needs, help develop strategies to cope, and provide direct links and pathways to other health and social support services.

All services are free.

Support is also available for families, friends and carers of people who are experiencing mental health issues.

Hubs are delivered in partnership with community health providers Mind Australia, Star Health, Ermha365, EACH, Mentis Assist, Wellways, Mallee Family Care, Uniting and cohealth.

To access a Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub call 1300 375 330 or for more information on hub locations, visit coronavirus.vic.gov.au/mentalhealthhub

For more information or to arrange an interview with Mind CEO Gill Callister or a Mind representative, please contact Mind Communications Manager Max McLean at max.mclean@mindaustralia.org.au or on 0497 333 545.