

|  |
| --- |
| Social Inclusion Action Groups  |
| Fact sheet  |
|  |

# A flagship prevention initiative to support social inclusion and connection

The Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System (Royal Commission) recognised that communities are best placed to support social inclusion and connection.

The Royal Commission recommended the establishment and funding of community collectives in each of the state’s 79 Local Government Areas (LGA). Recommendation 15.1, 15.2 and 15.3 of the Royal Commission refers to the establishment of community collectives, which have been renamed to as Social Inclusion Action Groups (SIAGs).

# Background

#### What is a Social Inclusion Action Group?

SIAGs aim to promote good mental health and wellbeing by supporting social inclusion and connection in communities.

SIAGs are community led and owned groups that make decisions and develop solutions at a local level to support social connection and inclusion. Each SIAG is supported by a funded coordinator from their local council.

Each group will:

* identify local needs, existing initiatives and gaps related to social connection and social inclusion
* test, develop and support a range of funded initiatives that prevent social exclusion and support community participation, inclusion and connection
* promote mental health and wellbeing through place-based coordination and activities/initiatives addressing social inclusion and connection.

#### Where are Social Inclusion Action Groups being established?

The Royal Commission recommended the establishment of SIAGs in each of Victoria’s 79 LGAs. The rollout of SIAGs is phased, with the first five SIAGs established in:

* Benalla Rural City Council
* Frankston City Council
* Latrobe City Council
* Mansfield City Council
* Rural City of Wangaratta

#### How are SIAGs funded?

As recommended by the Royal Commission, SIAGs will receive ongoing funding. The 2022-23 State Budget allocated $9.1 million to deliver the first five SIAGs from 2022-23 and the next five SIAGs from 2024-25.

Funding includes staff in each LGA, remuneration for group members and a Local Social Inclusion Investment Fund in each LGA. The Local Social Inclusion Investment Fund will support social inclusion and connection initiatives across two funding streams:

* General – 80 per cent of the Local Social Inclusion Investment Fund
* First Nations – 20 per cent of the Local Social Inclusion Investment Fund (decisions about the Aboriginal initiative funding will be made by the Aboriginal community).

# Membership

#### Who makes up a SIAG?

Membership of SIAGs should reflect the demographics of the local community. Membership should include a variety of lived and living experiences including members with experience of mental illness, psychological distress, addiction and/or social exclusion, isolation and discrimination.

SIAG membership should also reflect diverse communities (defined as people with a disability, LGBTIQ+ people and people from CALD background), as well as include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, young people and older adults.

It is expected that membership will evolve over time.

#### How can people join a SIAG?

There will be an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to recruit SIAG members in each LGA. For further information please contact your local council or email MHWPO@health.vic.gov.au

# Glossary

**Social exclusion** is the process of being shut out from social, economic, political, and cultural systems that help a person integrate into the community. Stigma and discrimination can result in social exclusion, and there is a recognised link between poor mental health and exclusion.

**Social inclusion** is a “population or community-level approach to not leaving anybody behind”, it is all about all people being able to participate in society and creating the conditions for all.

**Social connection** is a continuum of the size and diversity of one’s social network and roles, the functions these items serve, and their positive or negative qualities.

# Further information

For more information on Social Inclusion Action Groups, please visit our website: <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-wellbeing-reform/social-inclusion-action-groups>

For more information regarding Social Inclusion Action Groups, please email MHWPO@health.vic.gov.au

To receive this document in another format email the  Wellbeing Promotion Office, <MHWPO@health.vic.gov.au>.

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

© State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Health, April 2023.

Available at the [Social Inclusion Action Groups](Social%20Inclusion%20Action%20Groups) < https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-wellbeing-reform/social-inclusion-action-groups>.