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| Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals |
| Information for primary and secondary mental health care providers |
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# A new level of the mental health and wellbeing system

The Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System recommended the establishment of Local Adult and Older Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing Services across Victoria.

The new service stream, now known as Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals, are an important part of Victoria’s reformed mental health and wellbeing system.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals are designed to deliver integrated mental health and wellbeing treatment, care and support for people aged 26 years and over, who:

* need more support than they can get from primary and secondary mental health and related services (for example, general practitioners (GPs) and private psychologists and psychiatrists)
* do not need the type and intensity of treatment, care and support delivered by Area Adult and Older Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing Services (Area Services).

A network of Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals provides a wide front door to the reformed mental health and wellbeing system, meaning people can access treatment, care and support closer to home. They provide a welcoming and inclusive service that meets the diverse needs of our communities. These services are free of charge to consumers.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals are intended for people aged 26 years and over, however people under 26 years old will be supported to access age-appropriate services.

# Services offered

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals are free, voluntary, easy to access (no referral is required, but warm referrals are encouraged to support continuity of care) and delivered with a philosophy of ‘*how can we help?*’ and a ‘*no wrong door’* approach.

They offer:

* treatment and therapies
* person-centred wellbeing supports
* education, peer support and self-help
* consumer-led care planning and care coordination with other service providers.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals also provide integrated treatment, care and support for people with mental illness and co-occurring substance use, co-existing disability and trauma.

Priority is given to people who experience barriers to access and/or people who face the greatest barriers to good health and wellbeing.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals are delivered by a multidisciplinary workforce including consumer and family peer workers, mental health clinicians and wellbeing support workers.

# Accessing Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals are progressively establishing so the types of supports offered can vary across locations. Once fully operational, support can be delivered in a range of ways including in-person, telehealth, and outreach.

Please visit the [Mental Health and Wellbeing Local website on the Better Health Channel](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/mhwlocal) <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/mhwlocal > for information on how to contact the relevant Mental Health and Wellbeing Local.

For the most up to date information on future locations, please visit the [Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals page on the Department of Health website](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-reform/mental-health-and-wellbeing-locals) < https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-reform/mental-health-and-wellbeing-locals>.

Consumers can access Mental Health and Wellbeing Hubs, Partners in Wellbeing, Head to Health Services and other existing services while Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals get up and running.1

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals and primary and secondary health care services

The reformed mental health and wellbeing system has **six levels** of care, with the intensity of supports and services provided progressively increasing with each level.

* Level 1 comprises of social supports - families, carers and supporters, informal supports, virtual communities and communities of place, identity and interest.
* Level 2 is the broad range of government and community services outside the mental health system.
* Level 3 is primary and secondary mental health and related services.
* Level 4 is Local Mental Health and Wellbeing Services.
* Level 5 is Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services.
* Level 6 is statewide services.

Primary and secondary mental health and relatedservices (level 3) include care and support offered by GPs and other primary care services like community health services; psychologists and other allied health practitioners; paediatricians; maternal and child health nurses; and alcohol and other drug support providers.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Local providers have a current understanding of local needs and the delivery environment in the geographical area where the service operates. They work collaboratively with primary and secondary mental health care providers to facilitate warm referrals, including phoning the service for the person, passing on information to the service with the person’s consent and, in cases where people need more support, helping them to navigate the service system. Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals also support smooth transitions between services and shared care as a person’s needs increase or decrease.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals may provide:

* A consultation for the purpose of diagnosis, care planning or medication review (for a person who is also a consumer of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Local).
* Shared care for the purpose of:
* specialist medical or psychological treatment
* concurrent wellbeing, peer and care coordination supports. For example, a Mental Health and Wellbeing Local may act on a referral from a GP to provide a person with mental health challenges with support to address issues related to homelessness or social isolation.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals complement but do not duplicate or replace level three primary and secondary mental health services.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals are not a crisis service for people experiencing an immediate risk of harm to self or others.

# Service Framework

The full intent and functions of Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals is described in the [Service Framework](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-reform/recommendation-3) available on the Department of Health's website <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-reform/recommendation-3>.

The Service Framework reflects the vision and findings of the Royal Commission. It was developed with valuable and diverse input from people with a lived and living experience of mental illness, as well as technical and clinical advice from the mental health and wellbeing sector.

The Service Framework also provides a list of potential referrers to Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals.

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