



# Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals

## Frequently asked questions

### OFFICIAL

This factsheet has been developed to help you understand more about the services offered by Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals.

## What are Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals?

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals are a new type of mental health and wellbeing service being introduced in up to 60 locations across Victoria by the end of 2026. Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals will provide treatment, care and support for people aged 26 years and over.

They are free, voluntary and easy to access, with no referral required. Importantly, these new services will be delivered on the basis of *'how can we help?'* and a *'no wrong door'* approach, focused on giving you choice and control over how you want to receive support.

They will make it easier for you to access the support you need, closer to home and to your families, carers and support networks.

## What kinds of services will be offered at Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals?

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals will offer:

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

It will take time for each location to be able to offer the full range of treatment and support services, but once fully operational these will include face-to-face, telehealth and mobile outreach services that are provided one-on-one or in groups.

## What if I am experiencing both mental health and substance use concerns?

Support is available for anyone who is experiencing mental health and substance use concerns at the same time.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals will work with you and, if you are comfortable, your family, carers and supporters, to design a care plan that meets your goals and preferences.

Peer support workers, who use their personal lived experience to support other people who are facing similar challenges, will also be available to guide and support you.

## Who can use Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals?

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals are designed for people aged 26 years and over experiencing mental health or wellbeing concerns.

If you are a family member, carer, friend or supporter of someone with mental health concerns, you can also access support to help you in your caring role, or for your own mental health needs.

For information about support for young people, please see question below '*What support is available for people under the age of 26?*'.

## Are the services culturally safe and responsive?

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals are respectful of and responsive to cultural needs and diversity.

All visitors will receive fair access and culturally safe and responsive services that are free of stigma and discrimination, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQ+ communities, members of culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people from refugee backgrounds, people seeking asylum, people with disability and people who are neurodiverse.

## Are Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals free?

Yes, the service is free for everyone, even if you don't have a Medicare card.

## Do I need a referral from a health professional to access a Mental Health and Wellbeing Local?

No, you do not need a referral from your GP or any other health professional, or a mental health care plan to get support.

## How are Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals different to other mental health services?

Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals will care for people who need more support than a general practitioner (GP) or private mental health practitioner can offer, but who do not need higher-intensity services, such as hospital-based support services.

These new services will not replace existing services in your area. They will work closely with GPs, private mental health practitioners, alcohol and other drug treatment providers and other community-based health and social services, to ensure that all your support needs are being met.

## How do I contact a Mental Health and Wellbeing Local?

You can contact a Mental Health and Wellbeing Local in a few different ways depending on your preferences.

- Phone: 1300 375 330
- Website: [Mental Health and Wellbeing Local](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/mhwlocal) <<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/mhwlocal>>

## Can I access support if I speak a language other than English?

Yes. If you need more help in your language, you can call TIS National on 13 14 50 and ask for an interpreter, then ask to be connected to your closest Mental Health and Wellbeing Local on 1300 375 330.

## What will happen on my first visit?

You will talk to a mental health worker (this may be in person, online or over the phone).

This worker will focus on listening and understanding your concerns so they can work with you and, if you are comfortable, your family, carers and supporters, to design a care plan that meets your goals and preferences.

Your plan might include a mix of supports and therapies based on your needs. Some of these supports might be provided on your first visit, and others on later visits.

It's also possible that your needs would be better met by a different type of health or service provider. If this is the case, the Mental Health and Wellbeing Local will help you to access these services.

Peer workers will also be available to guide and support you as well as your family, carers and supporters.

## Is support available for carers, families and friends of people experiencing mental illness?

Yes. If you are a family member, carer, friend or supporter of someone with mental health concerns, help and support is available to you.

Whether you would like to receive help for you in your caring role, or for your own mental health needs – you will be able to get the care, support and advice you need, when you need it.

## What support is available for people under the age of 26?

If you or someone you support is between 12 and 25 years old, please visit or contact your local headspace centre for mental health and wellbeing support.

To find your closest headspace, please visit [headspace](https://headspace.org.au/) <<https://headspace.org.au/>>. Online chat and telephone support are also available through headspace.

If you are a young person, Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals may provide support in some situations, such as:

- you contact a Mental Health and Wellbeing Local looking for help
- you are having difficulty getting support through headspace or a hospital and need immediate assistance
- you are a family member, carer, friend or supporter of a person receiving support from a Mental Health and Wellbeing Local.

## What if I or someone I know needs emergency support?

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

In an emergency which is life-threatening or where there is immediate risk of serious harm to anyone, call Triple Zero (000). If you are not sure if it is an emergency, call Triple Zero.

Local services are not open 24 hours. For 24-hour crisis support, please call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

## Where can I get more information?

For the most up to date information on the establishment of Mental Health and Wellbeing Locals, please visit the [Mental Health and Wellbeing Local](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-reform/local-adult-and-older-adult-mental-health-and-wellbeing-services) page <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health-reform/local-adult-and-older-adult-mental-health-and-wellbeing-services>> on the Victorian Department of Health website.

If you would like to learn more about mental health and wellbeing reform underway across Victoria, please visit the Department of Health [Mental health and wellbeing reform](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health/mental-health-wellbeing-reform) webpage <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health/mental-health-wellbeing-reform>>.

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