

22 October 2021 - Maternal & Child Health Conference

New Directions for Mental Health and Well-being

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Acknowledgement of Country

I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians who have lived and loved this country through the vastness of time.

I honour the Wurundjeri Willum people of the Kulin Nation whose country I stand today, and I pay my respects to the Elders, past, present and emerging.

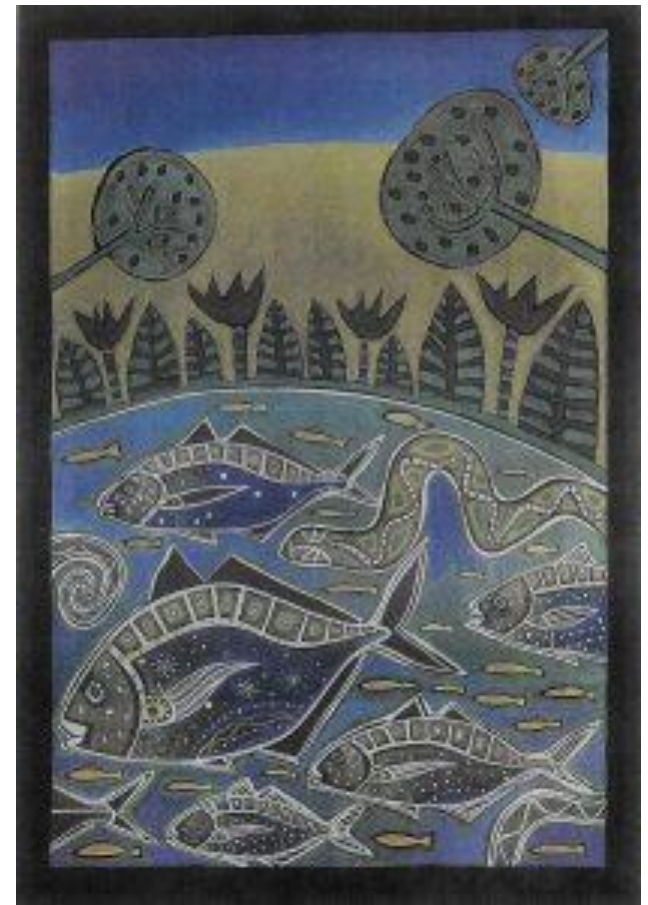


Image: Donna Brown (Koori Artist). Donna Brown from the Gumbainngir people of Northern New South Wales settled in Melbourne in 1994.



I would also like to recognise people with a lived experience of trauma, neurodiversity, mental ill health and substance use or addiction, their families, carers and supporters.

Our appreciation extends to the clinical and non-clinical workforces that support people with lived experience.

“So, the [Maternal & Child Health] nurse might be able to identify that there’s a need, but the ability to be able to access the services that are required, sometimes that’s not as available. And particularly in regional and rural areas. I think access is an issue to services and I think the other thing is that ... the level of disturbance or the level of need, has to be fairly high to access a lot of these services and there’s a shortfall in the middle when we’re starting to see things unravel for a family”

Source: MCHN, Royal Commission Final Report, Volume 2, Chapter 12, page 132 https://finalreport.rcvmhs.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/RCVMHS_FinalReport_Vol2_Accessible.pdf

The path to reform

- During the **2018 Victorian election**, the Government committed to establish the nation's first ever Royal Commission into mental health, and to implement all recommendations
- When the Royal Commission's **terms of reference were set in February 2019**, the question was never about whether the system would be reformed, it was about finding out the best ways to do it
- At that time, more than 170,000 Victorians had accessed mental health services in the previous 12 months. Still, too many people were falling through the cracks of a system that couldn't cope
- An **interim report**, tabled in Parliament on 28 November 2019, found Victoria's mental health system was under considerable strain

The path to reform



- On 2 March 2021, the Royal Commission released the **Final Report which set out 65 recommendations**
- The Final Report sets out an **expansive reform agenda** for a completely transformed mental health and wellbeing system inclusive of:
 1. A responsive and integrated system with community at its heart
 2. A system attuned to promoting inclusion and addressing inequities
 3. Re established confidence through prioritisation and collaboration
 4. Contemporary and adaptable services
- Specific perinatal mental health directions are included in Volume 2, chapter 12

Final Report vision

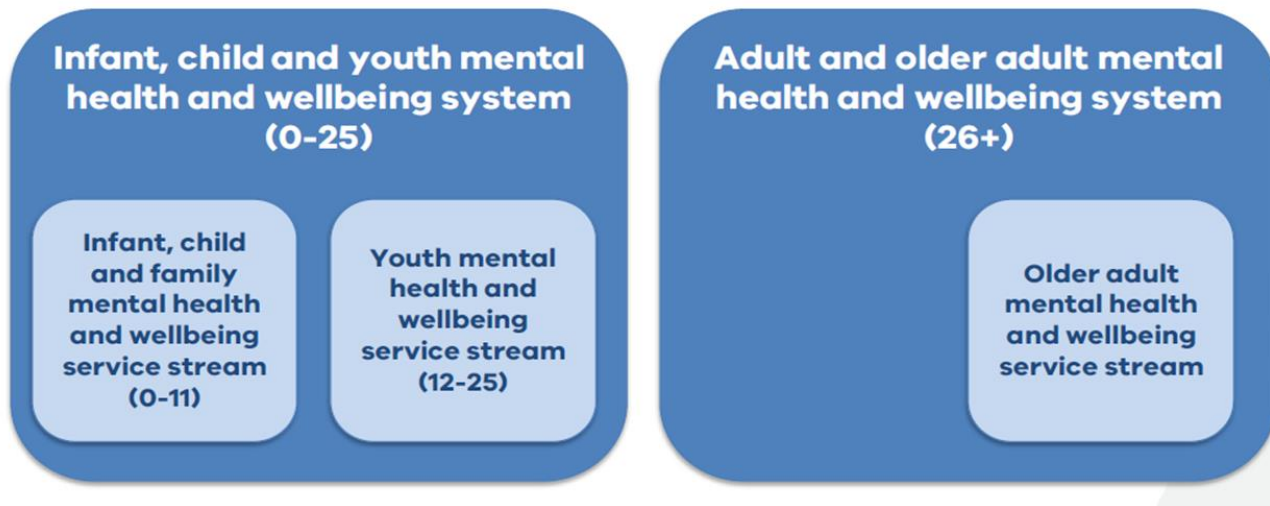
10 year vision for a re balanced system that has been rebuilt from the ground up , with communities at the centre

More responsive and integrated system that centres on a community based model of care that provides people with dependable access to services when and where it would make the most difference to them

More services are delivered in community settings and extend beyond an acute health response treating people early in the community, not too late in hospital

More holistic approach to good mental health and wellbeing across the community

Services will be provided across two age-based systems...



Maternal and Child Health Nursing services will interact across both. For example, mothers 26 + will engage with adult and older persons services, and in some cases, state-wide perinatal mental health services, whereas mothers 25 and under will engage with the infant, child and youth services.

Six levels in a responsive and integrated system

For the women, babies and families your work with, in this new reformed system, you will have access to the new six levels, noting access to level 6 is via referral from an Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Service.

This is not a stepped care approach, the vision is for the person to have access to the most appropriate services at the time that they need.



Perinatal mental health reforms

“The predominant focus of the current system is on mental health and wellbeing challenges that occur in young people and adults, with relatively fewer resources allocated to perinatal, infant and child mental health and wellbeing. This imbalance needs to be redressed so that access to contemporary treatment, care and support does not depend on age, and opportunities to change the trajectory of mental health and wellbeing challenges are harnessed”

Source: Royal Commission Final Report, Volume 2, Chapter 12, page 125

Perinatal mental health reforms – Recommendation 18

Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of prospective and new parents.

The Royal Commission recommends that the Victorian Government:

- 1. expand and reform the community perinatal mental health teams** in each Adult and Older Adult Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Service across Victoria to adapt and deliver the core functions as set out in recommendation 5, including by providing consultation to primary and secondary care and related services for prospective and new parents, including maternal and child health nurses.
- 2. review approaches to perinatal mental health screening**

Core functions as set out in Recommendation 5

Core function 1: Integrated treatment, care and support across four components:

a. Treatments and therapies	b. Wellbeing supports
c. Education, peer support and self-help	d. Care planning and coordination

Core function 2: Services to help people find and access treatment, care and support and, in Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services, respond to crises 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Core function 3: Support for primary and secondary services through secondary consultation with providers of those services, primary consultation with consumers, and a formal model of comprehensive shared care.

These services will be delivered across a range of modes (telehealth and digital technologies; in centres; and in people's homes or other settings, including through assertive outreach) and will be accessible and responsive to the diversity of their local community.

Source: Royal Commission Final Report, Volume 1, Chapter 6, page 297 [Final Report – Volume 1 – A new approach to mental health and wellbeing in Victoria \(rcvmhs.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Perinatal mental health reforms – Recommendation 19

Supporting infant, child and family mental health and wellbeing

The Royal Commission recommends that the Victorian Government:

1. establish one responsive and integrated infant, child and youth mental health and wellbeing system to **provide developmentally appropriate mental health and wellbeing treatment, care and support for newborns to 25-year-olds.**

Perinatal mental health reforms – Recommendation 19

2. by the end of 2022, **establish a dedicated service stream for infants, children and their families**, consisting of Infant, Child and Family Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services, within the 13 Infant, Child and Youth Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services (refer to recommendation 3(2)(c)) to:

- a. provide developmentally appropriate mental health and wellbeing treatment, care and support services for **newborns** to 11-year-olds and their **families**; and
- b. adapt and deliver the core functions of community mental health and wellbeing services (refer to recommendation 5), including through a range of delivery modes, **ensuring services are accessible and responsive to the diversity of local communities**.

Perinatal mental health reforms – Recommendation 19

3. by the end of 2022, and in partnership with the Commonwealth, **establish three infant, child and family health and wellbeing multidisciplinary community-based hubs.**
4. deliver evidence-informed **online parenting programs and group-based parenting sessions.**
5. establish **two statewide subacute residential family admission centres located in the community.**

Source: Royal Commission Final Report, Volume 2, Chapter 12, pages 123-124 [Final Report – Volume 2 – Collaboration to support good mental health and wellbeing \(rcvmhs.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Perinatal mental health reforms

*“The Commission’s vision for Victoria’s future mental health and wellbeing system includes providing **responsive and integrated treatment, care and support for prospective and new parents and for infants and children up to 11 years of age.** Victoria will have an evidence-based, contemporary system of treatment, care and support where parents, infants and children with mental health and wellbeing challenges are welcomed and treated compassionately”*

Source: Royal Commission Final Report, Volume 2, Chapter 12, page 126 [Final Report – Volume 2 – Collaboration to support good mental health and wellbeing \(rcvmhs.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Additional resources

- As a major reform, expanded **perinatal mental health clinicians and support workers** based in all Adult and Older Adult Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services **will be available for people in the early stages of their mental health and wellbeing challenges.**
- They will provide evidence-based treatment, care and support to help **prospective and new parents** to remain in their homes, focused on building strong relationships with their infant

Source: Royal Commission Final Report, Volume 2, Chapter 12, page 127 [Final Report – Volume 2 – Collaboration to support good mental health and wellbeing \(rcvmhs.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Additional resources

- The Commission intends that people admitted to hospital for physical health reasons will have increased access to integrated mental health treatment, care and support during their hospital stay through reforms to in-hospital mental health consultation liaison services. This means that public maternity hospitals will be able to provide in-house mental health consultation liaison services like the Royal Women's Hospital currently does.

Source: Royal Commission Final Report, Volume 2, Chapter 12, page 138 [Final Report – Volume 2 – Collaboration to support good mental health and wellbeing \(rcvmhs.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Screening

- In the future system, **perinatal mental health screening will be enhanced** through a review of screening practices in Victoria and better connections to treatment, care and support following screening.

Source: Royal Commission Final Report, Volume 2, Chapter 12, page 140 [Final Report – Volume 2 – Collaboration to support good mental health and wellbeing \(rcvmhs.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Partnerships

- New **partnerships** to provide treatment, care and support will be formed between different parts of the system so that infants and children can be better supported in the places they live, learn and play. These new partnerships include **shared care arrangements** between infant and child clinicians in Infant, Child and Youth Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services and GPs, paediatricians and **enhanced maternal and child health nurses**.

Source: Royal Commission Final Report, Volume 2, Chapter 12, page 127 [Final Report – Volume 2 – Collaboration to support good mental health and wellbeing \(rcvmhs.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.rcvmhs.vic.gov.au)

Support for primary and secondary services

- This **support will primarily be for maternal and child health nurses, GPs and maternity services**. It will be in the form of **primary and secondary consultation**, where clinicians and support workers from the community perinatal mental health and wellbeing teams provide specialist capability building, limited joint clinical care and formalised shared-care arrangements.

Source: Royal Commission Final Report, Volume 2, Chapter 12, page 144 [Final Report – Volume 2 – Collaboration to support good mental health and wellbeing \(rcvmhs.vic.gov.au\)](#)