



**Australian  
Nursing &  
Midwifery  
Federation**

VICTORIAN BRANCH

# Newsflash

24 December 2021

## **Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System ANMF Update**

Members will be aware that significant progress has already occurred following the release of Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System Final Report in March 2021. ANMF continues to ensure that mental health nurses have a voice during consultation and implementation of the ten-year reform process. This final update for members reflects on the reforms underway and upcoming priorities to consider as we move into 2022.

### **Key links**

The final mental health royal commission report

<https://bit.ly/3yVUqF1>

ANMF submission to the royal commission

<http://bit.ly/2Z5gcGL>

ANMF 'On the Record' updates

<https://bit.ly/3mufKfO>

## **Summary of reform – priorities and progress**

The Department of Health has provided a summary document titled *Mental Health and Wellbeing in Victoria Our priorities and progress in system reform and delivery*. It outlines the work underway on the state's mental health and wellbeing system. ANMF encourages members to review this document via <https://bit.ly/3plRv5m>

## **Workforce**

As per recommendations 57 and 58 of the Royal Commission's final report, Acting Premier and Mental Health Minister James Merlino this week launched *Victoria's Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Strategy 2021-2024*, alongside the *Victorian Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Capability Framework*.

ANMF will comprehensively review the strategy in depth so we can update members next month. In the meantime, we welcome the Andrews Government's announcement that it will provide an additional \$41 million to support the immediate actions in the strategy.

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This includes:

- \$1.3 million for up to 70 postgraduate scholarships, including 20 for alcohol and other drugs (AOD) practitioners in 2022 to undertake postgraduate training
- \$4.6 million to train 40 enrolled nurses and eight educators in mental health in 2022
- \$12.2 million for a training program for experienced allied health and nurse clinicians in mental health. This includes allocations for up to 50 nurses, 30 allied health training positions and supporting educator roles
- \$3.7 million to attract people to mental health careers
- \$600,000 for a capability training program to implement the Victorian Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Capability Framework.

This builds on the \$228 million invested through 2020-2021. The strategy and capability framework can be found via <https://bit.ly/3qERd9h>

## Scholarships

The royal commission interim report recommendation 7 called for 140 additional scholarships per year as part of planning for workforce reform and to address shortages. Investment has already flowed with the following scholarships implemented or to be progressed in 2022:

- 124 scholarships in 2021 (\$850,000 investment)
- 132 scholarships in 2022 (\$2.9 million investment)

**Victorian Department of Health Postgraduate Mental Health Nursing Scholarships:** 63 scholarships (worth \$3000) available for eligible nurses via <https://bit.ly/3qEZoT1>

**Psychiatric state enrolled nursing grants:** there are ten grants (worth \$2,717) available to mental health services <https://bit.ly/3pmZ8bv>

**ANMF forensic mental health scholarship:** ANMF introduced its first ANMF/HESTA scholarship for forensic mental health nursing postgraduate studies in 2021. We funded two scholarships to successful ANMF member applicants. ANMF has decided to continue this as an annual member benefit to support and encourage nurses into forensic mental health.

**ANMF grants:** our annual ANMF fee grants to support postgraduate and post-registration study will open Monday 17 January 2022. These grants provide eligible members up to 80 per cent of the tuition costs for postgraduate and post-registration study. Eligible courses include:

- postgraduate diploma in mental health nursing
- postgraduate certificate in addictive behaviours
- advanced diploma in mental health nursing.

Applications will close 31 March 2022. For details <https://www.anmfvic.asn.au/feegrant>

## Industrial Bodies Forum

ANMF is pleased to be a member of the newly founded mental health Industrial Bodies Forum, chaired by Pam Anders, Senior Executive Director Mental Health and Wellbeing Transformation. The purpose of the forum is to

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provide important information, share perspectives and identify opportunities for collaboration between industrial bodies and the Victorian Department of Health's Mental Health and Wellbeing Division.

The first meeting was held on 30 November 2021. The forum provides ANMF with an opportunity to ensure the voices of mental health nurses are heard during this important reform period.

## New initiatives

**Local services:** ANMF responded to Engage Victoria's consultation survey providing valuable feedback including the role of all mental health nurses in these models. This included the importance of a safe and welcoming environment, consistent models of care and considered implementation of the services.

Phase two of consultation included place-based forums for each of the six locations receiving the first local services: Benalla, Brimbank, Frankston, Greater Geelong, Latrobe Valley and Whittlesea.

The forums involved:

- sharing the outcomes from phase one engagement and how they will inform the service model for local services
- seeking input from community and non-tendering service providers on how to make each of the local services relevant to their local community.

ANMF has requested continued engagement with unions for the next phases of consultation on this initiative and will report back progress to members when this occurs.

Read more about local adult and older adult mental health and wellbeing services via <https://bit.ly/3qERd9h>

**Women's beds:** as per the interim report's recommendation 2, the Andrews Government has announced Australia's first specialist women's mental health service – with 35 acute mental health beds in Melbourne and Shepparton to support women with a range of complex conditions. The partnership between Ramsay Health, Alfred Health and Goulburn Valley Health will provide care for those who have experienced trauma and sexual abuse, women presenting with eating disorders, women experiencing perinatal mental health concerns and women who identify as LGBTIQ+. Read the Andrews Government media release via <https://bit.ly/3JfXuR1>

ANMF has successfully advocated for nurses working in the public in private model of care, employed by Ramsay Health, to receive additional public sector terms and conditions, including an agreed staffing model of care, which was not part of the original proposal.

**Pop-up hubs:** twenty pop-up community mental health hubs were funded in September to provide low-intensity support to the Victorian community. The hubs are being run by non-government organisations including coHealth, Mind and EACH. There is also a Partners in Wellbeing helpline 1300 375 330.

## Recent funding announcements

**Youth Prevention and Recovery Care (YPARC):** a \$141 million investment in the Victorian Budget 2021-22 will see new 10-bed residential facilities built in Ballarat, Geelong, Shepparton, Heidelberg and Traralgon – as well as existing YPARCs in Bendigo, Dandenong and Frankston completely refurbished and modernised. The new centres will support more than 900 extra young Victorians each year to get the tailored support they need in a crisis – more than doubling capacity of the state's current YPARC network.

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**Perinatal mental health:** \$6.89 million funding to expand and reform community perinatal mental health teams across the state. The additional funding will help meet the extra demand to ensure every new parent who needs support can get it quickly, and close to home.

**Child and youth mental health assertive outreach teams:** \$16.3 million to expand the mobile targeted assertive outreach mental health teams statewide, supporting more than 560 extra young Victorians every year.

The extra support will deliver an outreach team in 13 locations across Victoria – so young people across the state get the specialised care they need in their community.

The mobile teams are staffed by a variety of workers including mental health nurses, doctors, family and occupational therapists, psychologists and social workers – and importantly include youth peer workers with lived experience of the mental health system.

## Important work in 2022

**Mental Health Workforce Safety and Wellbeing Committee:** the final report's recommendation 59 called for the establishment of this ongoing committee to address occupational health and safety needs, co-chaired by the Department of Health and WorkSafe Victoria that will:

- a) identify, monitor and address existing physical safety and wellbeing risks as well as those that may emerge throughout the reform process; and
- b) develop tailored monitoring approaches for the psychological health and safety of staff in the mental health and wellbeing workforce.

ANMF is aware that this committee is due to be established in January 2022. We understand ANMF will be a committee member. ANMF continues to ensure there is a spotlight on workforce safety in addition to the wellbeing focus. We look forward to this important work in 2022.

**Census/data:** ANMF is aware there has been a workforce census in addition to a personnel survey to map the mental health workforce. We look forward to seeing this data in detail in order to understand the workforce profile and assist in workforce planning.

**Mental Health and Wellbeing Act:** ANMF provided a comprehensive submission during the consultation of the New Mental Health and Wellbeing Act which can be found via <https://bit.ly/30TyRbt>

ANMF has strongly recommended a mechanism in the new legislation for occupational health and safety oversight and compliance monitoring of both the new Act and *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. We support continuous improvement and best practice by:

- considering workplace safety during the implementation of the new Act, and ensuring potential health and safety impacts on staff are identified and eliminated or mitigated
- considering workload management during the implementation of the new Act, and making recommendations to rectify impacts
- monitoring and making recommendations to improve workplace safety across the lifespan of the new Act
- participating directly in the review of the new Act at years five and seven
- supporting ongoing research into workplace safety in mental health settings.

The government has not yet agreed to our recommendation.

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ANMF understands that the new legislation is due to be passed in July 2022. This new Act will impact on the work of all nurses across the state.

The Andrews Government has released a paper outlining the outcomes of consultation titled '*The new Mental Health and Wellbeing Act: What we heard*' which can be accessed via <https://engage.vic.gov.au/mhwa>. This paper highlights that 'people are concerned about the safety of consumers and staff and the need to balance that with treatment needs and dignity of risk.'

Any members with queries or feedback are encouraged to contact ANMF Mental Health Nursing Officer Jade Chandler via [records@anmfvic.asn.au](mailto:records@anmfvic.asn.au).

**JOB REPS AND HSRS ARE ENCOURAGED TO DISPLAY THIS NEWSFLASH ON YOUR WORKPLACE NOTICEBOARDS.**

**2021**

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