



HACSU

MENTAL HEALTH ROYAL COMMISSION INTERIM REPORT

Victoria's Specialist Mental Health Union



"The Royal Commission's interim report represents a critical beacon of hope for the consumers, families, carers and workers at the heart of Victoria's mental health system, together with a pragmatic roadmap for the funding of these vital reforms" - Paul Healey, HACSU State Secretary.

This morning, the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System delivered its interim report to the Victorian government. At almost 700 pages, it represents the 'halfway point' in one of the most significant public inquiries ever conducted in our sector.

HACSU is delighted that our recommendations, made earlier this year, for a minimum of 180 new positions each year in mental health nursing, and other allied health professions have been accepted by the Royal Commission.

This represents a major win for HACSU, our members, allies, and for the consumers, carers and families we all work to support.

Our attention and energies will now be focused on ensuring that the Victorian government delivers on its promise to implement these recommendations in full.

We are still working our way through the Royal Commission's full report, but wanted to give HACSU members an early snapshot of some of what we consider to be the key findings from the report.

The full report can be downloaded from:
<http://bit.ly/2QWRNif>

If you have questions about the report, please contact:
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WHAT IS THIS REPORT, AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

This morning's report is the interim report of the Royal Commission into Victoria's mental health system.

It makes numerous recommendations for changes aimed at redressing urgent problems in the Victorian mental health system.

It is not a final report. The interim report signals the direction of the final report (due October 2020). Recommendations in both reports will influence the future direction of the mental health system in Victoria.

The Commission expects that between now and October 2020 the Victorian Government will begin implementing all the recommendations presented in this interim report. We therefore expect work to begin immediately to implement these recommendations.

The Royal Commission's recommendations will be expensive. Current- inadequate- sources of funding will not be sufficient. The Royal Commission is recommending that the Victorian Government introduces a specific levy or tax for the funding of mental health system, and a dedicated capital investment fund.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HACSU MEMBERS

1. 120 additional funded graduate placements annually for mental health nurses
 - This is in addition to the current full-time equivalent staffing profile, to encourage and sustain growth.
2. Postgraduate mental health nurse scholarships to 140 additional nurses annually that covers the full costs of study.
3. 60 new funded graduate placements annually for allied health and other professionals in public mental health services in areas of need, including in rural and regional locations.
4. 30 flexible scholarships be awarded over the next five years to help employ Aboriginal people while they obtain clinical qualifications.



4. Educational and training opportunities and optional qualifications for lived experience workers, including:

- adding the Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work to the free TAFE course list
- structural supports such as supervision, training, career pathways and remuneration expansion and variation of lived experience work, including offering options for progressing and specialising; e.g., specialist advancement could allow for development of business or management skills

The Royal Commission has also directed major new investment in infrastructure and bed capacity. This includes:

5. Funding for 170 additional youth and adult acute mental health beds to help address critical demand pressures.

- Including 135 additional acute inpatient public mental health beds or equivalent beds, with the majority of these delivered by the end of 2021 and the remainder by mid-2022;
- These beds will be proportionally provided to:
 - Barwon Health—to service the Barwon region of Victoria
 - Melbourne Health, in alliance and partnership with Northern Health and Western Health—to service the inner-west, mid-west, northern and north-western regions of metropolitan Melbourne.

6. The establishment of a new entity, called the Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing. This will bring people with lived experience together with researchers and experts in multidisciplinary clinical and non-clinical care to develop and provide adult mental health services, conduct research and disseminate knowledge with the aim of delivering the best possible outcomes for people living with mental illness.

7. The establishment of Victoria's first residential mental health service designed and delivered by people with lived experience.