

Media release



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Mental health rebuild will require many hands

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) are encouraged by the long awaited release of the [Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System report](#).

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to design a mental health system that meets the needs of people with mental illness, their carers and families and the workforce which supports them explained RANZCP President-Elect, Associate Professor Vinay Lakra.

'The RANZCP looks forward to fully reviewing and digesting the entirety of the report and working closely with the Government in moving forward to reform the mental health system in Victoria', said Associate Professor Lakra.

'It is pleasing to see a number of aligning recommendations included in the Final Report that we, as the peak psychiatry body have been advocating strongly for, including measures to ensure provision of ongoing intensive treatment, care and support for people with severe mental illness, facilitating suicide prevention and response initiatives and embedding a trauma-informed approach in the mental health system.'

Whilst the RANZCP Victorian Branch are supportive of the recommendations in the report, there remains an integral need for workforce shortages to be addressed, to deliver on all the recommendations outlined.

RANZCP Victorian Branch Chair, Dr Rubin, said the report is a step in the right direction but emphasised the government must now prioritise the implementation of these recommendations in a well-funded and long-term approach.

'The current challenges facing the mental health system will only be solved with a coordinated reform strategy which involves key stakeholders within the sector', said Dr Rubin.

'A modern mental health system, built with lived experience and compassion at its core, offers hope for future mental health care that may finally meet the needs of all Victorians.

'We welcome the report's acknowledgement of the exhausted and overburdened workforce, and the moral distress of trying to provide care in a broken system. The workforce will be looking to the Government for support throughout the implementation of these recommendations.

'The broader issue of specialist staff shortages will need to be examined and addressed with the aim of building a well-staffed and well-trained mental health workforce.

'While it is positive to see the Royal Commission recommend a new workforce strategy and implementation plan by the end of 2021, there is an immediate need for deliberate and targeted action to ensure there are enough psychiatrists to meet ongoing demand.

'With the shortage of psychiatrists expected to worsen over time, measures which expand the psychiatry training pipeline should be a key priority for the Victorian government.

'We look forward to supporting the Victorian Government to fulfill its promise of implementing all recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System but caution them to do so in a careful and considered manner to ensure that we build an safe and inclusive mental health system for all.'

ENQUIRIES: For more information, or to arrange an interview call Sarah Carr on +61 (0)3 9640 0646 or +61 437 315 911, or email media@ranzcp.org.

For all other expert mental health information visit [Your Health in Mind](#), the RANZCP's consumer health information website.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists is a membership organisation that prepares medical specialists in the field of psychiatry, supports and enhances clinical practice, advocates for people affected by mental illness and advises governments on

mental health care. For information about our work, our members or our history, visit www.ranzcp.org.

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