



# Media Release

## Primary Care Partnerships lead community change and should not be cut

11 September 2019

The State-wide Chair of Victorian Primary Care Partnerships, Kevin Feeney, has called upon the Victorian Health Minister to categorically rule out defunding the State's twenty-eight health care partnerships. In doing so the Minister will create greater certainty for community based organisations to deliver on the Government's laudable and ambitious reform agenda.

The call follows direct questioning of the Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos by her Opposition counterpart Georgie Crozier during parliamentary question time on Tuesday.

In response to direct questioning, Minister Mikakos did not rule out defunding the partnership platform.

'Delivering a high quality, accessible and value-for-money health and social services is an ongoing challenge for the Victorian Government', Kevin Feeney said.

'We wholeheartedly recognise and support the need to properly resource patients, doctors and hospitals, but this is only part of a strong and effective health care system', he said.

'Most factors influencing health and wellbeing happen far away from doctors and hospitals in the places we live, work, learn and play.'

Victoria's Primary Care Partnerships (PCPs) are unique in the Australian health care landscape.

Established in 2000, PCPs connect more than 850 health, education, community service and local government organisations with local communities to share skills and harness resources to find solutions to local health and wellbeing challenges. They are key health infrastructure in rural communities, where the number of services has significantly declined.

PCPs support the delivery of over twenty state government strategies, actively embedding government policy and reform in local communities through more than 150 distinct initiatives.

'Our focus is on activities that prevent people becoming unwell, in areas like mental health, gambling, family violence and climate adaptation.

'These are high priority issues for government; our work saves the tax payer significant health care dollars as well as making communities healthier, happier and safer', Mr. Feeney said.

On average, each PCP directs more than sixty per cent (60%) of its modest funding to prevention activities.

This compares to just over 1% of total Australian health spending which places Australia well behind other developed nations such as Canada, New Zealand and the Netherlands.

'Evidence shows that local public health initiatives common to PCPs deliver a high return on investment of up to four dollars for every dollar invested. These efforts deliver direct benefits to the Victorian community.'

Recently the future of Victorian PCPs has become unclear due to uncertainty over funding.

'The current threat to our funding is more direct than we have experienced in the past. We stand ready to deliver the governments objectives of the recently released Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan and continue to deliver outcomes for Victorian communities.

'We call on Minister Mikakos to commit to continuing Primary Care Partnerships' modest funding for the benefit of all Victorians', Mr Feeney concluded.

**For more information please contact: Kevin Feeney, VIC Primary Care Partnerships Chair, [kfeeney@bestchance.org.au](mailto:kfeeney@bestchance.org.au) Phone 0418 202 501**

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800+

Member organisations across

- EDUCATION
- HEALTH
- JUSTICE
- SOCIAL SERVICES
- EMPLOYMENT

18 years experience in:

addressing complex health & social issues

building successful partnerships

responding to local, regional & statewide needs

# Primary Care Partnerships

## What we do

### 1 Partnerships

We build effective partnerships with the local community to improve health and wellbeing.

We do this by driving quality improvement and best practice across the system by sharing data, undertaking integrated planning, action and evaluation, workforce and resource development and community participation.

### 2 Addressing inequity

Our efforts focus on improving health & wellbeing for people experiencing vulnerability.



### 3 Areas of work

We work in system integration and prevention in the following areas:



## Benefits

We have a deep understanding of the issues facing our local communities. We have demonstrated experience in bringing the right people together to work collaboratively to develop local solutions to local problems.

1

We are facilitating the local implementation of over 20 state government policies and reform agendas

Our work ensures that local outcomes align with Victorian government outcomes.

2

The impact of our partnership work is stronger local, regional and state-wide collaboration and action. This collaboration generates creativity and innovation, reduces duplication and healthcare costs.

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