

Media Release

Communities will lose out if Primary Care Partnerships are defunded

3 October 2019

The Statewide Chair of Victorian Primary Care Partnerships, Kevin Feeney, has written to the Victorian health minister seeking a meeting to discuss the future of the State's twenty-eight health care partnerships.

Following heated parliamentary debate in September, the Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos is yet to confirm whether the network will be refunded in 2020.

'We are concerned about the future of Victoria's unique Primary Care Partnerships as the end of year funding deadline draws ever closer', Kevin Feeney said.

'We can't sit on our hands and wait for a decision. Every day our uncertainty grows and this uncertainty unsettles our partners, staff, and the communities we serve.'

Victorian Primary Care Partnerships (PCPs) have delivered new research to the Minister showcasing their work and the contributions made to the health and wellbeing of everyday Victorians.

A new publication [Contributing to better health and wellbeing outcomes for our communities: Examples from around Victoria](#) showcases nearly thirty case studies demonstrating how PCP work aligns with and supports the achievement of key government priorities as well as delivering practical on-the-ground support to address the needs of a diverse range of Victorians and their families.

'These case studies represent just a fraction of the approximately 150 initiatives currently being delivered by PCPs across the State. These activities support more than twenty government policies and reform agendas', Mr Feeney said.

A statewide audit of PCP activity since July 2017 also reveals, that on several measures, PCPs are delivering significant value for money to government:

- **PCPs leverage additional resources:** For every core dollar invested, PCPs have generated an additional \$0.92 from other state, commonwealth and non-government sources; in addition, one in three of its 300 initiatives involving 2 or more partners also includes pooled financial resources.
- **PCPs connect partners:** PCPs connect more than 850 health, education, employment, justice, local government and community service member organisations with local communities.
- **PCPs involve communities:** PCPs have delivered over 1100 events, education sessions, campaigns and other projects directly engaging community members to improve health and wellbeing.
- **PCPs prevent poor health and save health dollars:** PCPs have invested heavily in activities shown to prevent people becoming unwell, delivering almost 300 prevention initiatives supported by around 120 prevention networks and over 500 health promotion practitioners.
- **PCPs help partners and communities navigate change:** Most PCPs (80%) have played an active role in helping partners navigate complex reforms in mental health, NDIS and aged care, with many also supporting communities to adapt to climate change.
- **PCPs build evidence about what works:** PCPs have engaged in over 50 formal partnerships with academic institutions.
- **PCPs engage and build a skilled workforce:** PCPs have delivered over 900 workforce development activities attended by almost 20,000 people, including their current workforce of more than 150 highly specialised and qualified staff, tertiary students and volunteers.

'Across the platform, individual PCPs are able to double their average \$380,000 annual funding through other sources, not to mention other in-kind support plus cost savings generated through reduced hospitalisations and greater system efficiency.'

'We remain committed to securing the future of PCPs in Victoria and call on the Minister to work with us to ensure Primary Care Partnerships are able to grow into the future', My Feeney concluded.

For more information please contact: Kevin Feeney, VIC Primary Care Partnerships Chair on 0418 202 501 or email kfeeney@bestchance.org.au