

## **Prevention and Recovery Care Service (PARCS)**

### **Questions and Answers**

#### **What is a Prevention and Recovery Care Service?**

PARC provides short term care residential care for people suffering from a mental illness who need support, with most people staying 2 to 3 weeks. The service is staffed by trained professionals and supported by the North Eastern Mental Health Service, operated by Austin Health.

#### **Why has the PARCS been created?**

Sometimes a person who suffers from mental illness needs short-term support in order to get them through a difficult patch and get them back home living independently. The service can prevent people from requiring hospital admission or act as a convalescent house upon discharge from hospital. We call it “step-up or step-down”.

#### **Where will the people who stay at the PARCS come from?**

Admission will be limited to residents of the shires of Banyule and Nillumbik.

#### **Who will run the PARCS and who will work there?**

The property is owned by the Victorian Government and it provides funding to Austin Health to run the service. Austin Health will arrange for a specialist service provider to deliver the day-to-day service. All staff will be trained professionals with qualifications and experience in caring for and working with people with mental illness. The service will be staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There will be approximately three staff on site at all times.

#### **How many people will stay there?**

Up to ten people can stay at the PARCS but experience at other PARCS suggests that there are likely to be around 7 or 8 people at any time.

#### **Why Heidelberg Heights?**

The PARCS is being developed in Heidelberg Heights because the area provides a positive community environment. It is close to shops, community services, leisure services, health services and public transport.

### **When will the service start operating?**

We expect the service to be operating by mid 2014.

### **Are there other PARCS in Victoria?**

There are already 14 adult PARCS and 3 youth PARCS across Victoria. Metropolitan PARC services are located in areas such as Mont Albert, South Yarra, Springvale, Flemington, Preston, Broadmeadows, Springvale, Clayton, Ringwood and Deer Park. There are rural PARCS in areas such as Shepparton, Bendigo, Geelong and Bairnsdale. There also youth focused PARC services operating in Bendigo, Dandenong and Frankston.

### **Should people living near the PARCS be concerned about people who will reside in the house?**

Those people who use the PARCS would otherwise be living in their own homes nearby in the local community. They will benefit from living in a normal, quiet residential environment. They will use the local shops, transport and community resources the same as us all.

Mental illness affects one in five people from a range of family, cultural, economic and social backgrounds.

People who need inpatient care will not use a PARC service rather admitted to into hospital care.

### **Are people living near the PARCS at risk of violence or local disturbances?**

All those seeking to use the PARCS will be assessed by Austin Health for suitability. Anyone assessed as aggressive or violent will not be admitted.

Generally, people with mental illness are more likely to be the victims of violence than perpetrators of violence.

Any violence or aggression will be reported to police.

### **Will residents be out in the street during the day or at night?**

Yes – people who stay in the PARCS will be encouraged to be active members of the community; it is just that they will have some extra support. They will engage in the types of everyday activities that you would expect of anyone and they will be free to move around at any time.

**What about parking?**

There will be onsite parking and the number of parking spaces has been calculated in accordance with need.

**Has the Department of Health complied with all necessary planning requirements in establishing the PARC?**

In addition to meeting all planning requirements, the Department of Health and Austin Health have commenced a process of informing the local community about the PARCS.

**Will there be signage to identify the PARCS?**

There will be no external signage.

**Will the community be informed when building works are about to begin?**

Yes, time lines for clearing and construction will be available as construction continues.

**What traffic disruption might there be during the clearing/construction?**

The work will be similar to that done when a new home is constructed or a major renovation and extension is undertaken. Contractors and tradespeople will abide by all local Council and State Government building regulations.

**What should I do if I have more questions?**

If you want to speak to someone, you can ring Sharon Sherwood on 9496 2738. Queries can also be emailed to [sharon.sherwood@austin.org.au](mailto:sharon.sherwood@austin.org.au)