
Call out for expressions of interest (EOI)

Forensicare: Engagement with families, carers and supporters about regional forensic mental health teams

Online Meeting – Tuesday 27 September 2022 – 4pm to 5:30pm

Introduction

Forensicare, Victoria’s specialist provider of forensic mental health services, would like to engage with families, carers and supporters about its plans to establish community-based teams in each of Victoria’s eight mental health and wellbeing regions.

On Forensicare’s behalf, Tandem is calling for family, carer and supporters to express an interest in attending an online meeting at **4.00 – 5.30pm, Tuesday 27 September 2022**

- This paper describes the initiative that will be discussed in the meeting and the type of input Forensicare is seeking...

What are the proposed regional forensic mental health teams?

Attachment 1 provides an overview of the services Forensicare delivers in the community, Thomas Embling Hospital, and prisons.

To complement its existing services, Forensicare is developing a service model for regional community-based forensic mental health teams. The teams will help people with lived experience of mental illness who:

- are at risk of entering or have entered the criminal justice system
- may require admission Thomas Embling Hospital
- are exiting Thomas Embling Hospital, prisons, or youth justice facilities (over the age of 18 years)
- have difficulty receiving the complex care they need through mainstream mental health services.

A key function of the teams will be to assist area mental health and wellbeing services (AMHWS) to provide appropriate treatment, care and support to consumers who require specialist input to reduce their risk of involvement (or further involvement) with the criminal justice system. Over time, the teams will build relationships with other local service providers.

A pilot team will be established in the Barwon South West region, with similar services progressively implemented in other regions of over the next two–three years. The Barwon South West region is a high priority for additional forensic mental health capacity due to its concentration of existing prisons (Barwon Prison, Marngoneet Correctional Centre, and Karreenga Correctional Centre), a planned new maximum-security facility (Western Plains

Correctional Centre) and the new youth justice facility under construction at Cherry Creek, to the southwest of Werribee.

The new service will align with Forensicare's model of care, which describes how Forensicare aims to empower recovery for all Victorians living with mental illness who are at risk of entering, or have entered the justice system, and help them to lead safe and meaningful lives free from offending (see <https://www.forensicare.vic.gov.au/model-of-care>).

Why is the project important?

The services developed through the project are part of the implementation of [Recommendation 37.2](#) from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. This recommendation is about strengthening community-based forensic mental health services.

Currently, Forensicare's community forensic mental health services are not consistently available across the state, as they are based in metropolitan Melbourne. Forensicare's strategic plan identifies a need to strengthen the organisation's role as a statewide service provider by expanding its reach into regional and rural areas of Victoria.

The service developed through the project will also support a range of other recommendations from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. For example, the Royal Commission recommended that an additional 107 beds be built at Thomas Embling Hospital (by the end of 2026). While this will greatly improve access to inpatient forensic mental health services, there is the potential for these beds to fill quickly with patients who are unable to be discharged if we do not put in place appropriate and sustainable community supports and services.

What difference will the service make?

Expanding community-based forensic mental health services will help:

- **consumers**, by:
 - acknowledging their unique journey and ensuring they get the right care in the right place, at the right time, by the right person
 - improving pathways into and out of Thomas Embling Hospital and ensuring that inpatient stays are not longer than necessary
 - supporting people released from prisons and on court orders requiring supervision in the community
 - providing a true statewide service that supports consumers in regional communities as well as in the metropolitan area
- **families, carers, and supporters**, by ensuring specialist care is accessible in their region, and that mental health services are able to guide them on the options available to them and their person

- **AMHWS**, by improving their access to specialist forensic mental health services, including consultation and direct treatment, care, and support for their consumers.

What does Forensicare want to discuss with families, carers and supporters?

A wide range of stakeholders are being consulted as part of the project, including lived experience representatives and advocacy groups; mental health, justice and other service providers; and government departments.

Discussions with families, carers, and supporters are focusing on the following questions:

1. What are the needs of their families, carers and supporters?
2. What are the needs of consumers who will use the service?
3. What services should Forensicare's regional teams provide?
4. What pathways would need to be developed or enhanced to ensure to that consumers and families, carers, and supporters can access other necessary services?
5. Are there groups (for example, those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander) with specific needs that we should consider?
6. What skills and attributes are needed by staff of the service?
7. What would 'success' look like, and how should we measure and monitor the success of the service?

Lived and living experience recruitment needs: Who does Forensicare want to speak with?

1. Forensicare would like to speak with people who have lived experience as a family member, carer and/or supporter of someone who has mental illness and is involved – or at risk of involvement – with the criminal justice system.
2. While Forensicare is currently focusing on service implementation in the Barwon South West region, the model being developed will eventually be established across the state. Therefore, family members, carers and supporters from anywhere in Victoria are welcome to express interest in attending the online meeting.

Tandem will select up to 12 people from the Tandem Participation Register to contribute to Forensicare's online meeting.

Is payment available to support lived experience representation?

- Yes, family, carer and supporter representatives will be paid in accordance with Tandem's remuneration policy
- Participation and remuneration will be at the 'Involve level' half day rate: \$175.00 (for up to 4 hours) including 1.5 hr meeting time and any pre-/post-meeting time commitments, such as pre-reading, feedback and evaluation



Next steps – How to Express your Interest as a Tandem Participation Register member

Please send your expression of interest (EOI) with subject line **EOI – Forensicare regional forensic mental health teams** in a reply email to mhcregister@tandemcarers.org.au by **9pm, Tuesday 20 September 2022** including:

1. Your full name*
2. Preferred pronouns (he/him - she/her - they/them)*
3. Email address*
4. Phone number*
5. A few words (up to 250 words) about your interest in the 'Forensicare's service model for regional, community-based forensic mental health teams' including any lived experience that may be relevant and why you would like to contribute this area of [mental health and wellbeing reform](#)
6. Your current availability to commit as follows:
Tuesday 27 September 2022 - 4pm to 5:30pm - online via Zoom
7. Optional inclusion: If you identify with any intersectional identities and communities including First Nations peoples, Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, LGBTIQ+, non-binary, and gender diverse communities, Disability, All Abilities communities, Neurodiverse communities, if you live in a metro, rural or regional area

**Privacy Note: Your name, email address and phone number will be provided to Forensicare Project Team for all engagement communication including official invitations and online meeting links, engagement updates, pre-reading if applicable, feedback and evaluation*

Contact

If you have any questions about this Register engagement opportunity, please do not hesitate to contact:

Elissa Stanovic, Tandem Participation Register Coordinator

Email mhcregister@tandemcarers.org.au | Phone 03 8803 5555

If you have questions about the Forensicare's project, Tanya Mularczyk and Deirdre Pinto are leading the project at Forensicare. Please feel free to contact them:

Tanya: tanya.mularczyk@forensicare.vic.gov.au or 0466 318 346

Deirdre: deirdre.pinto@forensicare.vic.gov.au or 0400-021-962



Thomas Embling Hospital (TEH)

Secure forensic mental health hospital with 136-beds

Eight units spanning intensive, acute, sub-acute, extended rehabilitation and transitional rehabilitation

Most patients are admitted directly from prison under a Security Treatment Order (to access compulsory treatment not available in prison) or via the courts under a Custodial Supervision Order. A small number are 'civil' patients, including people who were on STOs when their sentence expired and those referred from Area Mental Health and Wellbeing Services.

All patients are treated under the *Mental Health Act 2014*.

\$350m expansion underway, due for completion in 2024, will add at least 82 beds.



Prison Services

Provision of forensic mental health services across 13 Victorian adult prisons. Services include:

- ❖ Mental health assessment for every person on entry to prison (>11,000 p.a.)
- ❖ 141 Forensicare Mental Health Custodial Unit beds
- ❖ Outpatient service and specialist consultation
- ❖ Crisis assessment and treatment ('At Risk') response at five metro prisons
- ❖ Psychiatrist, Nurse Practitioner, Psychology outpatient clinics at regional prisons
- ❖ Intensive case management model of care at Ravenhall
- ❖ *Mental Health Act (2014)* compulsory treatment pathways:
 - ❖ Secure Treatment Orders to TEH
 - ❖ Inpatient Assessment Orders (on release to community)
- ❖ Mental health training for custodial staff.

Initiatives in 2022-2023 relate to the new Western Plains Correctional Centre and as recommended by the Royal Commission, a suicide prevention and engagement service and a mental health transition support service.



Community Forensic Mental Health Services

CFMHS provides a range of community and court-based programs and services for people requiring specialist forensic mental health advice, consultation, assessment, or treatment.

CFMHS also supports consumers as they transition from Thomas Embling Hospital to the community.

CFMHS programs include:

- ❖ Community Transition and Treatment Program
- ❖ Non-Custodial Supervision Order Consultation and Liaison Program
- ❖ Problem Behavior Program
- ❖ Court Mental Health and Response Service
- ❖ Forensicare Serious Offender Consultation Service
- ❖ Victorian Fixated Threat Assessment Centre (VFTAC)
- ❖ Coordination of the Forensic Clinical Specialist Initiative and the Youth Justice Mental Health Program.



Tandem Support and Referral Line Reminder:

The Tandem Support and Referral Line provides support, information and referral to the family members, friends and carers of people living with mental health challenges

[Call us on 1800 314 325](tel:1800314325)

You can call us for free from 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday, to:

- Speak with someone who understands your situation
- Seek general advice, advocacy and information on services to meet your needs
- Seek support with NDIS access and plan issues

Please note that we are not a crisis service. If you or someone else may be at risk of suicide please contact:

Lifeline [13 11 14](tel:131114) - Suicide Helpline [1300 651 251](tel:1300651251) - Kid's Help Line [1800 55 1800](tel:1800551800)

Who can call the Tandem Support and Referral Line?

Family members or friends who are supporting a person with mental health issues are eligible to use Tandem's Support and Referral Service.

If you are a [Tandem member](#) (in addition to Tandem Participation Register membership), you also have access to individual advocacy, support and referral through an Advocate.

This may include:

- Assisting family and friends to understand their rights and responsibilities under relevant legislation and service policies and procedures.
- Empowering members to advocate effectively on their own behalf; and
- Providing family and friends with appropriate referrals.

Family, friends, and carers can access this support and referral service by becoming a [member](#) of Tandem

For more information please call [1800 314 325](tel:1800314325) or email info@tandemcarers.org.au

The Advocate can advise on the use of the [Nominated Persons and Advance Statement](#) components of the Mental Health Act