



Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck

Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians

Minister for Youth and Sport

Gavin Pearce MP

Federal Member for Braddon

MEDIA RELEASE

26 August 2019

New mental health care program for Tasmanian aged care residents

The Morrison Government is delivering a trial for a new model of care designed to improve access to mental health services for people living in aged care facilities.

Local not-for-profit organisation Richmond Fellowship Tasmania will deliver the support for residents by giving them access to a targeted course of mental health services without out-of-pocket expenses.

Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians Richard Colbeck recognised the importance of seniors in aged care being able to access high quality mental health care.

“Seniors in residential aged care have a higher rate of mental illness so this program provides affordable access to additional mental health care,” Minister Colbeck said.

“The program is designed to sit alongside the care and social support seniors already receive from facility staff and other service providers.

“Around 10% of the population over 65 suffer from mental illness and this trial service will provide assistance to around 120 people in the first year.

“While it’s early days, we’re very hopeful this new approach will help improve the quality of life of Tasmanians living with a mental illness in residential aged care.”

In the program’s initial stages, Richmond Fellowship Tasmania will partner with a residential aged care operator in each region of Tasmania – South, North, and North West – to offer residents a range of evidence-based treatment options to be delivered within the facilities.

The psychological services offered may vary between facilities, according to the needs of residents, and are likely to include both face-to-face and group therapy sessions.

Member for Braddon Gavin Pearce said the ensuring seniors in the local area were supported

was a key priority for the region.

“I’m very pleased to deliver more health services for people in the North West and particularly for seniors in aged care who might be having a hard time with their mental health,” Mr Pearce said.

“As a former RSL President I’ve seen how challenging it can be for people to manage their mental health as they age and how important it is that we support people who have contributed so much to our country.

“This is good news for seniors in Ulverstone and in the other trial sites across Tasmania.”

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