

Thursday, 15 September 2022

Urgent call for Palliative Care funding overhaul.

Today, Palliative Care Victoria (PCV) and its 85 member organisations (including Palliative Care South East) called for an immediate increase in Palliative Care funding following the release of alarming data that suggests the sector faces a shortfall of \$91 million in annual funding by 2025.

The Sustainability of Palliative Care in Victoria report prepared by KPMG was released today and found more than half of Victoria's palliative care providers are at breaking point and unable to meet current demand for their services whilst more than 70% don't believe they can meet future demand.

Victoria's ageing population and the pandemic have increased demand for palliative care across the state.

"Demand for community palliative care has skyrocketed as more and more people, with a life-limiting illness, are choosing to avoid hospitals and die at home," Palliative Care South East (PCSE) CEO Kelly Rogerson said today.

"Our service has seen a 50% increase in demand, over the past two years, as people choose to stay at home where they can be surrounded by family and friends without restrictions," Ms Rogerson said.

NSW is funding palliative care at almost double the rate of Victoria.

In addition to the \$91 million required to implement Victoria's current *End of Life Palliative Care Framework*, PCV and its members are calling for an additional \$31 million per year in immediate funding to future proof the sector and ensure increased and equitable access for residents of aged care facilities, access to overnight respite for carers, an investment in workforce training and education and a community awareness campaign.

More than 1300 clients with a life-limiting illness were referred to PCSE in the last financial year. Last month, PCSE supported 78 clients in Melbourne's South East to die.

"All Victorians should have the right to live, die and grieve well but we cannot fully implement Victoria's *palliative care and end of life framework* without more funding," Ms Rogerson said.

More than 30,000 Victorians, their carers and families could benefit from palliative care if there was sufficient funding.

Ms Rogerson, who is also the Chair of Palliative Care Victoria said PCV had released a statement today calling for all political parties to commit to increased funding for palliative care

Palliative Care South East is a not-for-profit, home based palliative care service supporting individuals with a life-limiting or terminal illness and their carers and families.

We provide services to residents of the local government areas of Dandenong, Casey, Cardinia and part of Kingston.

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