



17 June 2019

ROYAL COMMISSION ANNOUNCES RURAL HEARING LOCATION

The town of Maryborough in the Shire of Central Goldfields will host a day of public hearings next month as part of the Royal Commission into Victoria's mental health system.

Commission Chair Penny Armytage said the Commission was always planning a rural location for hearings.

"During our community consultations we visited more than 20 locations across the state and heard from more than 1,600 people – so we know there are specific issues that rural communities face in accessing mental health services and supports," Ms Armytage said.

"We also heard about the challenges of isolation in places like the Shire of Central Goldfields which means people need to travel long distances to get help."

The hearing will be held at The Community Hub in Maryborough on Monday 15 July and a schedule of witnesses will be released before the session.

The Commissioners will also undertake a site visit at the Maryborough District Health Service prior to the hearing, to discuss some of the issues affecting the local community.

Public hearings for the Commission are set to run from **Tuesday 2 July until Friday 26 July** and will be held at the Melbourne Town Hall. The Commission will also hold a dedicated day of hearings on Tuesday 16 July to consider issues specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities, taking place at the Aborigines Advancement League in Thornbury.

"The public hearings are an important next step for the Royal Commission. They will help us formally collect evidence from expert and community witnesses to build on the reflections and insights we have heard during our community consultations and through the submission process so far," Ms Armytage said.

The hearings will be open to the public and will be streamed live on the Commission's website, except in particularly sensitive circumstances.

Daily hearing schedules will be available on our website prior to the hearings commencing. Transcripts of the public hearings and witness statements will also be made available.

Online submissions remain open **until 5 July** and can be made at www.rcvmhs.vic.gov.au. If you need help to make a submission or have any questions, please call **1800 00 11 34** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) or email contact@rcvmhs.vic.gov.au. The Commission can also be contacted using a phone interpreter service on **03 7005 3010**.

If you or a family member has immediate concerns or requires assistance, contact beyondblue on 1300 224 636 or Lifeline on 13 11 14.