

Construction begins at Launceston Head to Health site

Monday 20 December 2021

Work has started on a new, purpose-built adult mental health centre in the heart of Launceston that will serve as the permanent home of the Launceston Head to Health service.

Federal Member for Bass, Bridget Archer will mark the milestone today (Monday 20 December) by turning the sod at 62-64 Canning Street alongside Primary Health Tasmania's Mark Broxton and Nicci Dickson from Stride, the organisation that will operate the centre.

The Canning Street building site will eventually house Launceston Head to Health, an Australian Government-funded initiative that aims to improve access to mental health and related support services for adults who need immediate support — including those in distress or crisis — as well as family and friends seeking information and advice.

By crafting the centre from the ground up, those working to establish Launceston Head to Health have been able to design a custom-made facility in partnership with locals with lived experience of mental illness.

The result is a concept design that doesn't look traditionally 'institutional' or 'clinical', and instead creates an atmosphere of warmth and safety by embracing colour, warm lighting, and elements of the natural world.

Other benefits of the Canning Street site include:

- size
- central location
- proximity to public transport
- proximity to the Launceston General Hospital
- capacity to be tailored to reflect the service's philosophy of care
- parking options.

The Launceston Head to Health centre is expected to move to Canning Street in mid-2022 after starting service delivery from an interim site on Paterson Street in late January.

Initial services will be available from the interim site, with full service delivery to follow once Launceston Head to Health has transferred to the permanent site.

Primary Health Tasmania (Tasmania PHN) is overseeing the establishment of Launceston Head to Health under the Australian Government's Primary Health Networks program.

Last month, Primary Health Tasmania announced experienced mental health provider Stride had been chosen to operate the service following an open tender process.

Since then, Stride has been busy recruiting a wide range of Launceston Head to Health team members and building collaborative relationships with local mental health consumers, providers, and organisations such as Lifeline, Baptcare, The Salvation Army, and Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania, and Anglicare.