



Health and Wellbeing

Investing in the foundations of thriving communities



The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments are delivering bold reforms to better support the health and wellbeing of families across the state, including through the overhaul of the mental health service system and the *Best Start, Best Life* changes to early years services.

Alongside this, the Victorian Government’s adjustments to the Maternal Child Health services have been welcome, although funding challenges remain for this service as well as the School Crossing Supervisor program, immunisation program, and in the Environmental and Public Health space.

Yarra Ranges: Opportunities and Challenges

To better understand local needs in light of these ongoing challenges and changes, Yarra Ranges Council conducted a wide-reaching analysis of human services needs across our region in 2023.

The **Human Services Needs Analysis** (HSNA) provides insight into the main issues and trends affecting services, including shifting community needs, access to services, workforce challenges, funding and infrastructure.

Most services have experienced rising demand over the past four years, with nearly two-thirds of services experiencing demand that they had been unable to meet. People are now needing more services per person, have more complex health issues, and are deeply affected by issues such as housing and family violence.

Services with the most increases in demand since 2019 were **emergency and food relief, housing and homelessness support, social connection and support, mental health, and financial counselling.**

These findings have helped to shape Council’s advocacy priorities, as outlined over the page.

Council will continue collaborating with local service providers to expand our collaborative advocacy efforts, including opportunities to work with other levels of government and close these critical service gaps.

Yarra Ranges Council	Victoria Government	Commonwealth Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Wellbeing Plan • Municipal Recovery Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-27 • Royal Commission into Victoria’s Mental Health System • Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Strategy for Disaster Resilience • Early Years Strategy • Vision 2030: Blueprint for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

With continued investment and targeted policies, Yarra Ranges Council and its local partners can enhance the delivery of critical health and wellbeing services and safety programs to the community.

Initiative	Requirements (Investment and Policy)
★ Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded resourcing for integrated mental health services, including for headspace Lilydale Funding for mental health outreach service through Anchor (min. \$130,000 per annum), including outreach through schools to reduce homelessness and early school leaving
Emergency Relief Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a funding model that provides for ongoing support officer roles to oversee operations, as well as core staff to develop strategic partnerships
Early Years services and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated \$8.7 million to redevelop Rolling Hills facility in Mooroolbark, including 3 x playrooms for 33 children, 2-3 Maternal Child Health and allied health consult rooms, refurbished community room. Establishment funding for Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme
Maternal Child Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a framework that provides flexibility for targeted service delivery to families most in need; and direction and support to deliver services through other innovative means e.g. reallocation of some Key Age and Stage responsibilities to kindergarten services through the expansion of 3-year-old kinder Review of MCH funding model by State Government in partnership with MAV and Local Government representatives to include all service delivery costs and asset renewal costs
School Crossing Supervisor Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad strategic review into the School Crossing Supervisor system, including the overarching service model, funding, technology and workforce challenges.
Immunisation services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review into immunisation service funding, to ensure state government funding keeps pace with the growing cost of service delivery
Environmental and Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding and support to enable the effective implementation of new Environmental and Public legislation and regulations

★ **Priority initiative**