

21 February, 2025

## **St John of God Health Care unveils new trauma service for frontline heroes at its Langmore Centre in Victoria**

With an unprecedented demand for mental health care across the country, St John of God Health Care is pleased to announce the opening of a new specialised psychological trauma recovery unit for emergency services workers and defence force personnel at its Langmore Centre in Berwick, Victoria.

St John of God Health Care is committed to compassionate, committed and connected care and enhancing mental health support for communities. It manages the largest community-based mental health service among Catholic hospital groups in Australia.

The new Emergency Services and Defence Trauma Recovery Unit, which will be operational from 24 February 2025, offers secure, holistic care with tailored inpatient care and day programs provided by trauma-focused clinicians.

St John of God Health Care South East Melbourne Hospitals CEO Lisa Norman says it is important for emergency services workers and defence personnel to know that they are not alone and that we are here, ready to support them.

“It’s important for people to know that there are treatments and support available to help them manage their symptoms and regain control of their lives. The most challenging step is recognising there is a problem and finding access to the right programs. Our goal is to instill hope, guiding patients and their families towards a brighter future,” explains Ms Norman.

Research shows that cumulative exposure to trauma in emergency and defence services can lead to increased alcohol abuse, aggression, domestic violence and suicidal thoughts. Studies also reveal that stigma and a lack of understanding about long-term trauma exposure can hinder access to treatment.

The new unit has been developed in response to community need and is designed to provide targeted care to people whose mental health can be directly impacted by the work they perform.

Emergency services and defence force personnel face unique challenges, with one in seven at risk of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Associated conditions like depression, anxiety, chronic pain, anger, drug and alcohol reliance, relationship and sleep issues are also common.

“We’ve learned that police workers, in particular, fear encountering patients they’ve interacted with during their job, which can make them hesitant to seek inpatient care. To address these concerns, our new unit provides a safe, welcoming and private environment,”

A combination of treatments and services are tailored for the individual, offering a blend of allied and clinical support with access to the facilities and support needed for recovery.

Programs include a mix of inpatient and day patient services, including individual and group therapy, medication, exercise, art and music therapy, pain management and neuro-stimulation.

Emotional and spiritual support is provided through the hospital's pastoral care services, and a regular carer's group is available for families of both current and previous patients.

The 12-bed unit features private rooms with ensuites, comfortable furnishings, and an accessible room for patients with disabilities. It includes a laundry, kitchen, tea and coffee facilities, and individual storage lockers. Amenities available for patient use include a gym, chapel, pharmacy, a communal courtyard, a private outdoor deck area and lounge as well as dietitian-approved meals.

"While this is a new unit, our highly successful trauma programs that have been running for many years at the Langmore Centre and at our Richmond Hospital in NSW, will also continue. If urgent care is needed, don't hesitate to seek help – we are ready to provide immediate support whenever necessary." says Ms Norman.

The opening of this new unit is part of St John of God Health Care's national initiative to provide essential care closer to home for emergency services and defence force personnel and their families. Through an expanding network of specialised Trauma Recovery Centres and a new research strategy, St John of God Health Care will focus on early intervention and partner with local psychiatrists and support services to offer care that is accessible and meets the differing needs of local communities.

Admission to the new Emergency Services and Defence Trauma Recovery Unit at Langmore requires a referral from a GP or treating psychiatrist followed by a phone assessment for eligibility. It can be funded by private health, WorkCover or DVA and is available to emergency services workers and defence force personnel Australia-wide.

Enquiries about admission can be made by calling (03) 9773 7000 or emailing [Langmore-Intake@sjog.org.au](mailto:Langmore-Intake@sjog.org.au)

## **ENDS**

### ***Media contacts***

*Langmore Centre:*  
*Lisa Carman*  
*0407 682 501*  
[\*lisa.carman@sjog.org.au\*](mailto:lisa.carman@sjog.org.au)

*St John of God Health Care Group Services:*  
*Christine D'Souza*  
*0437 976 118*  
[\*media@sjog.org.au\*](mailto:media@sjog.org.au)

# Media Release



## ***About St John of God Health Care***

*St John of God Health Care (SJGHC) is one of the largest Catholic providers of health care services in Australia. Established in Western Australia in 1895, we are not-for-profit private health care group and a ministry of the Catholic Church.*

*We employ 16,500 staff across Australia and New Zealand operate 26 facilities comprising more than 3300 beds in Australia and New Zealand, as well as home nursing, disability services and social outreach programs.*