

MEDIA RELEASE

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COBAW & CASTLEMAINE COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES INVESTIGATING A MERGER

The Boards of neighbouring community health services, Cobaw Community Health (Cobaw) and Castlemaine District Community Health (CDCH) today announced they are in formal discussions to amalgamate.

Anne Bates, CDCH CEO explained, “CDCH is currently the smallest community health in the State, so for us this means an opportunity to expand the services offered in Mount Alexander Shire. The Board is seeking long-term sustainability”.

Margaret McDonald, Cobaw CEO explained further, “By combining forces with CDCH we are in a better position to attract funding to our region, in the first instance to support and expand our existing work. Existing collaborations between the two organisations including the School Focused Youth Service and the Central Victorian Volunteer Service will continue. In the future it means having greater opportunities to grow, adapt and meet the emerging needs of local communities as they change – including being able to deliver NDIS services across our region,” Ms McDonald said.

Due diligence processes will now begin with a view to the Boards of both organisations making final decisions about the structure of any future amalgamation, in consultation with staff, community and stakeholders. In the meantime, “it will be business as usual for both services as we go about the process. Both organisations are optimistic that the existing collaborative relationship will be formalised. We share the same vision and purpose in serving geographically similar rural communities and recognising the diversity within them,” said Ms Bates.

Ms McDonald agreed, “Our plan is based on a clear and agreed principle of equitable delivery of sustainable, increased services and the operational efficiency we can achieve together. In short, it’s a story of neighbours becoming good friends, and then taking it to the next level and formalising the relationship to become something more – together. The prospect of a closer relationship or merger is a significant opportunity for us, our employees and our unique communities,” concluded Ms McDonald.

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