



## Gippsland's first Priority Primary Care Centre opens in Baw Baw

10 January 2023

A new Priority Primary Care Centre (PPCC) has opened at the Warragul Specialist Centre, operated by Central Clinic, as part of the Victorian Government's initiative to give Victorians a free alternative to visiting a busy emergency department.

Gippsland Primary Health Network (Gippsland PHN) is working in partnership with Central Clinic in Warragul to establish the Baw Baw PPCC. This GP-led clinic, that opened on 4 January 2023, will be supporting West Gippsland Healthcare Group (WGHG).

Gippsland PHN Acting Chief Executive Officer, Angela Jacob, said the establishment of the Baw Baw PPCC demonstrated a collaborative approach across health services to support a growing community need.

"The Baw Baw PPCC will help reduce waiting times in the WGHG emergency department for conditions such as mild infections, fractures and burns," Mrs Jacob said. "Diagnostic services including pathology and medical imaging will also be available."

The Baw Baw PPCC accepts bookings and walk-ins with doctors and nurses on site. Operating hours are currently 1pm – 9pm Monday to Friday, and 9am – 5pm Saturday and Sunday, with a plan to extend operating hours in the future.

General Manager of Warragul Specialist Centre, Kira Cooper, said she looked forward to partnering with WGHG.

"This project has provided an opportunity for GP's to collaboratively support their local emergency department where healthcare for minor primary care type presentations can be difficult to access after-hours," she explained. "With a successful first day operating at eight hours, we look forward to stepping up the service delivery to 16 hours a day, seven days per week over the coming weeks."

Acting CEO of WGHG, Trish O'Kelly, said the PPCC would help the community to access medical care that may have a positive effect in the hospital's Emergency Department.

"This will give our community another option for non-emergency care and take the pressure off our doctors and nurses," Ms O'Kelly said.

Bookings at the Baw Baw PPCC, located at 197-199 Sutton Street, Warragul, can be made by calling (03) 5642 6666.

PPCC operating hours will be updated regularly on the Better Health Channel website at <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/priority-primary-care-centres-ppccs>.

*Photo caption: At the opening of the Baw Baw PPCC; Site Coordinator, Melinda Fawcett, Registered Nurse, Julie Beasley and GP, Dr Kethees Ketheeswaran.*

**For more information, contact Tracy VanderZalm at Gippsland PHN on 0447 491 345.**