

Media Release – 6 May 2020

New psychological support service in Clayton, Victoria: free perinatal mental health support for new parents

Today, on World Maternal Mental Health Day, it was announced that a new free psychological counselling service will open at Gidget House Clayton on 18 May 2020. In partnership with Jean Hailes for Women's Health, the new service provides free psychological counselling sessions for GP-referred expectant and new parents experiencing perinatal depression and anxiety (PNDA).

The new Gidget House offers free counselling services by appointment and employs local psychologists. Due to COVID-19, however, all appointments will be conducted by [telehealth video-counselling](#) (or telephone) until further notice.

Gidget House Clayton is the first Victorian Gidget House and joins its sister-services in the expanding [Gidget Foundation Australia](#) network of Gidget Houses. These include Toowoomba in QLD and Sydney services at North Sydney, Stockland Merrylands, Randwick at Karitane, Manly at the Royal Far West, North Sydney at The Mater Hospital, St Leonards at North Shore Private Hospital and regional NSW services with Tresillian at Dubbo, Taree, Coffs Harbour and soon opening at Stockland Shellharbour.

Pregnancy and childbirth bring joy along with challenges. The Gidget Foundation and Jean Hailes recognise the importance of emotional wellbeing for new parents, and the need to provide them with support and services.

Arabella Gibson, CEO Gidget Foundation Australia said, "It can be a stressful, lonely and overwhelming time caring for a newborn and speaking about mental health issues remains really difficult for many expectant and new parents. There can be a stigma surrounding these kinds of issues, but we know our psychologists, who are perinatal specialists and have local understanding, will be able to help with that. Many of our existing clients say counselling at Gidget House has been a life changing experience. And as a free service, it's also going to help families who would otherwise struggle to pay for specialist psychological counselling."

Ms Gibson said the partnership with Jean Hailes is a wonderful collaboration. "We are delighted to team up with Jean Hailes to provide comprehensive psychological counselling for new parents in and around Clayton. The services on offer will mean that so many more mums and dads will have the support they need during this vulnerable and often isolating time in their parenting journey," she said.

David Lloyd, CEO Jean Hailes, said "We're incredibly happy to share the Jean Hailes Clayton medical clinic with Gidget House. The work Gidget Foundation Australia does is invaluable for expectant and new parents. It aligns with our clinical offerings, which includes support for general women's health issues, endocrinology, physiotherapy and psychology. Women are welcome at Jean Hailes through all of their life stages."

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About Gidget Foundation Australia

Previously known as postnatal depression, perinatal anxiety and depression during pregnancy and early parenthood (the perinatal period) affects almost 100,000 Australians each year, equating to 1 in 5 new mums and 1 in 10 new dads. Gidget is the nickname of a vibrant young mother from Sydney who took her own life while suffering from unrecognised postnatal depression. She hid her suffering even from her loving family and friends. They created the Gidget Foundation, determined that what happened to Gidget would not happen to others.

Today, Gidget Foundation Australia assists thousands of expectant parents and their families each year and provides psychological services to [parents in need](#) through its [Gidget House](#) face-to-face services (at an expanding number of locations), its [Start Talking](#) telehealth program and Emotional Wellbeing antenatal screening programs conducted through participating hospitals.

Gidget Foundation Australia is a not for profit organisation, supported by the community, the corporate sector, the medical profession, the NSW and Commonwealth Governments, and the media.

About Jean Hailes for Women's Health

Jean Hailes for Women's Health is a national not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving women's health across Australia through every life stage. Jean Hailes has a unique model, built on four pillars: education and knowledge exchange; research; policy; and clinical care, with two medical centres in Victoria.

Jean Hailes aims to translate the latest scientific and medical evidence to help inspire positive change in women and girls by improving their physical health and wellbeing. In 2016, Jean Hailes was officially recognised as the Federal Government's national digital gateway for women's health.

For further information, interviews or images:

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