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# Social Services Regulator visits family violence and Aboriginal services in Gippsland

The new Social Services Regulator is meeting with providers in Gippsland this week to better understand their role in protecting social services users in the region from avoidable harm.

Jonathan Kaplan met with representatives from West Gippsland Healthcare Group and Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative as part of a tour of family violence, children, homelessness and Aboriginal services in the state’s southeast.

Mr Kaplan’s first stop was Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-operative Limited, which provides a range of culturally appropriate services to meet the needs of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

As part of the regional visit, Mr Kaplan travelled to Warragul, Sale and Lakes Entrance, visiting Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation and Gippsland Lakes Complete Health, connecting with staff and helping providers understand their obligations under the new scheme.

The visit follows the release of additional guidance to help providers meet service suitability requirements before registering with the Regulator.

Under the new *Social Services Regulation* [*Act*](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/social-services-regulation-act-2021/001) *2021* (Vic) and the *Social Services* [*Regulations*](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/statutory-rules/social-services-regulations-2023/001) *2023* (Vic), providers of social services in Victoria must register with the Social Services Regulator.

The aim of registration is to make sure social service providers can provide safe services to better protect service users and prevent harm.

The new legislation, which took effect on 1 July, will strengthen the community sector by streamlining and simplifying the regulation of social services and reducing red tape.

The Regulator can identify shortcomings in service delivery and work with providers to meet standards, issue fines to providers and initiate criminal proceedings for aggravated breaches of the standards where there has been wilful and serious non-compliance.

For information about registration, timeframes, and to read the suitability requirements fact sheet, visit [www.ssr.vic.gov.au](http://www.ssr.vic.gov.au).

**Quotes attributable to Jonathan Kaplan, Social Services Regulator**

**“**It’s been fantastic visiting service providers in Gippsland to gain a deeper understanding of how providers deliver services and how we can work together to achieve the best outcomes for regional Victorians.”

**“**The staff at these services carry out vital and valuable work supporting victim survivors of family violence and users accessing children and homelessness services.”

“Every child and every family deserves to feel safe and supported – and the work being done on the ground across Gippsland is a positive step in making that a reality.”