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| Media release |
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# Social Services Regulator visits disability and family services providers in central and north-east Victoria

Victoria’s Social Services Regulator visited regional social services providers in Bendigo, Echuca and Shepparton this week to better understand how they are working to keep local clients safe from avoidable harm.

Jonathan Kaplan is Victoria’s [Social Services Regulator](https://www.vic.gov.au/social-services-regulator), an independent statutory authority established in July 2024 to oversee the regulation of services in Victoria including family violence, sexual assault, homelessness, supported residential services, and disability services not within the National Disability Insurance Scheme, as well as government-funded children, youth, and family services.

On Thursday 1 May, Mr Kaplan met with staff at Amicus Community Services in Kangaroo Flat, a service provider supporting adults and young people living with a disability in the Bendigo region, before heading to Echuca to visit Vivid, who provide a range of disability support to clients across north-eastern Victoria including residential support and day programs.

On Friday 2 May, Mr Kaplan was in Shepparton to meet with two community-based child and family services providers, Primary Care Connect and FamilyCare and to attend FamilyCare’s Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan launch.

New legislation introduced in July 2024 requires all Victorian social services to register with the Social Services Regulator, and these regional visits are a great opportunity for the Regulator to connect with providers on the ground and hear about their experiences and any unique challenges they face in delivering services to their community.

The Regulator is committed to supporting providers across regional Victoria and has previously met with services in Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Ballarat, Warrnambool, Geelong, Warragul, Morwell, Sale and Lakes Entrance. Visiting service providers across the state is part of the Social Services Regulator’s approach to strengthening protections for social services users to safeguard vulnerable Victorians from harm, abuse and neglect.

For information about the Social Services Regulator, please visit [www.ssr.vic.gov.au](http://www.ssr.vic.gov.au).

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

*“Hearing directly from local service providers in Bendigo, Echuca and Shepparton this week about the work they do, the challenges they face, and how we can work together to create positive outcomes for social services users has been really valuable.”*

*“Everyone living with a disability or facing social, health and other life challenges in regional Victoria deserves to feel safe and supported, and it’s great to see so many local services working hard to make this a reality.”*

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