

# Therapeutic Support Guideline & Service Agreement



Implemented 31 August 2023 | Version 4

## 1. About the agreement

This document is an agreement for the services provided by external health service providers (Therapeutic Supports) to victim-survivors engaging in the Pathways Victoria model. It introduces Pathways Victoria's expectations and operationalises the values we stand for to promote trauma-informed best practice in the care of people who have experienced institutional childhood sexual, physical, and psychological maltreatment and abuse.

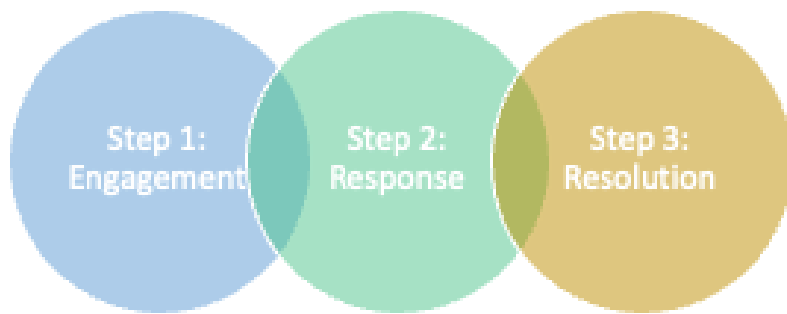
The Agreements have been designed to provide a transparent process for Therapeutic Support and those engaging with our service in delivering evidence-based practice and trauma-informed care. Our Trauma-Informed Care and Practice Model (TICP) provides an experience of respect and understanding of diversity and inclusivity, which promotes outcomes that:

- empower victim-survivors to manage their emotional, physical, spiritual and social wellbeing
- promote the movement towards victim-survivors achieving functional independence and community participation
- are goal and future-focused based upon the individual needs
- establish and coordinate strong collaborative partnerships and integrated care delivery between victim-survivors and their Therapeutic Supports.

Consistent with best practice, the Therapeutic Support Agreements are regularly reviewed to reflect continuous improvement and developments. Pathways Victoria welcomes feedback from Therapeutic Supports and our victim-survivor that supports improvement in our processes and practices.

## 2. About Pathways Victoria

Pathways Victoria is a new organisation responding to reports of abuse of minors and adults at risk and sexual misconduct within the Catholic Church in Victoria and their claims for resolution.



Pathways has three distinct functions: (1) engagement and support for people, (2) responding to allegations of abuse and (3) resolution of matters including a monetary payment. Pathways seeks to provide a compassionate, fair, transparent and accountable process for responding to allegations of abuse that is:

- person centred
- trauma-informed
- timely
- accessible
- an alternative to an adversarial civil court approach
- respectful of the primacy of police investigations
- compliant with legislative and regulatory requirements such as administered by the Commission for Children and Young People
- Upholding of safeguarding measures relating to the children and adults at risk
- In matters involving a child, the protection of children is the paramount consideration, as stated in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic), s 16B(1).

### 3. Who can provide therapeutic support?

Therapeutic services can be provided by mental health professionals registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and their relevant professional registration bodies, such as the Psychology Board of Australia. Students or health service providers holding provisional registration are not funded to provide services by Pathways Victoria.

Pathways Victoria understands the impact past trauma can have on a victim-survivor's current functioning and well-being, and we expect Therapeutic Supports to have in-depth knowledge of the neuro-psycho-social effects of childhood sexual abuse and be experienced in trauma-related interventions and approaches. We also recognise the relational nature of trauma and healing. As a result, Pathways Victoria expects Therapeutic Supports to participate in a collaborative decision-making approach to victim-survivor treatment, support and recovery that emphasises self-determination by victim-survivors and focuses on their strengths, preferences and aspirations.

In supporting best practice, Pathways Victoria expects Therapeutic Supports to be embedded in the trauma-related and recovery-oriented care principles of the professional bodies to which they belong.

### 4. What Pathways Victoria funds

Pathways Victoria can pay for reasonable costs for psychological services provided to our victim-survivors by Therapeutic Supports.

## Consultations and counselling sessions

Pathways Victoria expects that Therapeutic Supports will seek approval from Pathways Victoria before providing billable services to our victim-survivors.

Pathways Victoria funds a maximum of twelve 60-minute session per victim-survivor based on clinical complexity of victim-survivor presentation and on the intensity of treatment required. Intensity of treatment per episode of care can be classified as high where weekly sessions are warranted, moderate at fortnightly to three-weekly and low at monthly to quarterly. If the Therapeutic Support determines that additional or time-extended sessions are clinically indicated, Therapeutic Supports are expected to request these in writing from Pathways Victoria.

Treatment ceases at 12 sessions, the conclusion of Step 3: Resolution, or disengagement with Pathways Victoria or whichever comes first.

Please note that without prior approval, Pathways Victoria will not fund additional or time-extended sessions.

## Report

Pathways Victoria may request a report on behalf of a victim-survivor. The purpose of this report is to support the victim-survivor with continuum of care. The information requested for this report will be limited to recommendations from the Therapeutic Support provider to assist with engaging external supports following the completion of the victim-survivor's episode of care.

Pathways Victoria's fee for the completion and submission of a report is based on the APS rate and is expected to take less than one hour. Reports are billable to Pathways Victoria.

## Counselling for secondary victim-survivors

Individual immediate family members who are Pathways Victoria's secondary victim-survivors are eligible for up to six counselling sessions following their registration with Pathways Victoria. Immediate family members may be partners, parents, siblings or children affected by our primary victim-survivors' trauma. Therapeutic Supports should charge their usual fee for their consultation services subject to Pathways Victoria's prior approval.

## Counselling for children

Pathways Victoria, from time to time may refer children and young people to Therapeutic Supports for psychological counselling. It is expected that our Therapeutic Supports are clinically trained and qualified in the area of child developmental psychology/psychiatry and are willing to undertake a Working with Children Check (WWCC) or provide verification of WWCC clearance.

In providing counselling services to children and young people, Therapeutic Supports are required to adhere to Child Safe Standards, Code of Ethics and relevant ethical guidelines consistent with these standards and in alignment with their professional membership body.

Pathways Victoria is committed to and supports the practice of Child Safe Standards. Our expectation is that our Therapeutic Supports consider how their practice embeds a culture of child safety that promotes the participation and empowerment of children and young people. Therapeutic Supports should charge their usual fee for their consultation services subject to Pathways Victoria's prior approval.

## Family and couples counselling

Family counselling refers to counselling provided to immediate family members for up to six sessions. This may be funded by Pathways Victoria where clinically justified in writing by Therapeutic Supports on the basis of Pathways Victoria's prior formal approval.

Where a primary victim-survivor engages in therapy with a Therapeutic Support and then chooses to enter a couples counselling arrangement with the same counsellor, Pathways Victoria encourages Therapeutic Supports to discuss conflict of interest considerations with the victim-survivor.

Therapeutic Supports should charge their usual fee for their consultation services subject to Pathways Victoria's prior approval.

## Travel

In the rare instance that Pathways Victoria victim-survivors are unfit to travel to and from their Therapeutic Support's consulting rooms, any travel costs proposed by the Therapeutic Support will require pre-approval from Pathways Victoria.

# 5. What Pathways Victoria does not fund

Pathways Victoria does not fund the following:

- Treatment beyond twelve sessions
- Treatment beyond Step 3: Resolution or disengagement with the Pathways model
- Backdated services
- Advocacy services
- Treatment or services that do not align with the TICP framework
- Dual services, for example a general practitioner who also provides counselling services to the same victim-survivor
- E-therapy services that can be accessed free of charge by the public
- Telephone calls and telephoned consultations between providers and other providers, including hospitals, without Pathways Victoria's pre-approval
- Complementary or adjunctive services such as massage, naturopathy and supplements
- Psychometric testing and psychological assessments

# 6. Referrals to Therapeutic Supports

## Sourcing Therapeutic Supports

Pathways Victoria's role is to source, coordinate and facilitate victim-survivor referrals to qualified and experienced AHPRA-registered Therapeutic Supports. These include psychologists and medical practitioners, as required and other relevant and qualified healthcare professionals.

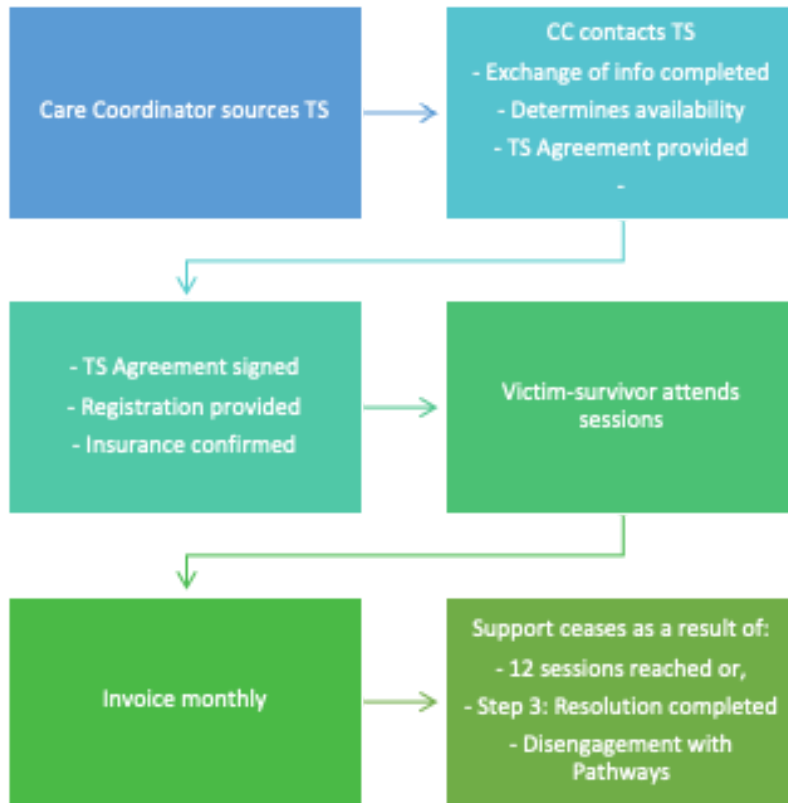
Under circumstances where a victim-survivor prefers to select their own Therapeutic Support or has established an existing therapeutic relationship with a provider, Pathways Victoria may fund these services provided the provider is registered with AHPRA and their professional body and has appropriate experience working with victim-survivors and patients with childhood sexual trauma history.

Pathways Victoria's approval must be formally confirmed before any ongoing funding for services can be sought or billable invoices submitted to Pathways Victoria.

## Referral process

Pathways Victoria's Care Coordinator initiates the coordination of victim-survivor referrals to Therapeutic Supports.

Pathways Victoria's Care Coordinator makes contact with the Therapeutic Support before making referrals to confirm relevant registration requirements, experience in institutional abuse and trauma, and to discuss availability for continuity of care and presentation of the victim-survivor if relevant.



Once Pathways Victoria's expectations of a collaborative working relationship, 12-session reporting requirements and review process have been agreed to by the Therapeutic Support, Pathways Victoria formally engages the Therapeutic Support to provide services to our victim-survivor/s on the basis of 12-session episodes of care.

Where victim-survivors prefer to select their own Therapeutic Support or have an existing therapeutic relationship with a practitioner, Pathways Victoria must first approve the arrangement before it will fund any sessions.

Approval is based on meeting Pathways Victoria's Therapeutic Support criteria as outlined in section 5.

## 7. Policy and process

### Privacy and record keeping

It is expected that Pathways Victoria and Therapeutic Supports acknowledge and comply with the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) as outlined in Schedule 1 of the Privacy Act 1988 in the handling, use and management of our victim-survivors' personal information.

Further, Therapeutic Supports contracted by Pathways Victoria are professionally obliged to understand and comply with the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic) to protect the privacy of victim-survivors' health records.

## Service fees

Therapeutic Supports should charge their usual advertised fee for their consultation services subject to Pathways Victoria's prior approval.

## Appointment cancellations

Pathways Victoria expects Therapeutic Supports to inform their victim-survivors of their own cancellation policy.

Pathways Victoria will fund the full cost of two missed appointments per calendar year where 24-hours' notice of cancellation was not provided by victim-survivors.

It is expected that Therapeutic Supports notify Pathways Victoria of more than one non-attendance or cancellation by the person.

# 8. Payment guidance

## Tax invoice details

For prompt and accurate payment please ensure that tax invoices contain the following information:

- The words 'Tax Invoice'
- Company/agency name
- Australian Business Number(ABN)
- Payee practice address
- Payee billing address(if different from practice address)
- Account banking details
- Client case reference (CCR) number
- Victim-survivor details
- Invoice number
- Date of service
- Service location (if different from practice address)

Some services may be subject to GST. Information regarding GST registration can be obtained from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) website at [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au).

## Invoice timeframes

All tax invoices are to be forwarded to Pathways Victoria on a monthly basis. Pathways will not be backdated beyond this.

Payments may take up to four weeks to process. If payment is not received within four weeks from the date of receipt of your tax invoice by Pathways Victoria, please contact our Care Coordinator.

A deposit will be made into your bank account or nominated institution via EFT. Invoices can be emailed to - [accounts@pathwaysvictoria.com](mailto:accounts@pathwaysvictoria.com)

Pathways can also accept invoices directly by Xero and can provide our Xero key for streamlined payments.

Enquiries about outstanding tax invoices can be made via email to [accounts@pathwaysvictoria.com](mailto:accounts@pathwaysvictoria.com)

# 9. Service Agreement signatures

The below named service provider agrees to the terms and conditions of this Service Agreement.

<b>Victim-survivor Name:</b>	
<b>Client case reference (CCR) number:</b>	
<b>Name of Service Provider:</b>	
<b>Representative Name and Position:</b>	
<b>Representative Signature:</b>	