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MERGER BETWEEN COBAW & CASTLEMAINE COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES NOT TO PROCEED

The proposed merger between neighbouring community health services, Cobaw Community Health (Cobaw) and Castlemaine and District Community Health (CDCH) will no longer proceed following six months of discussions.

The two community health services announced plans to formally explore a merger in March 2017. Both organisations agreed from the start to make sure the proposed amalgamation would ensure positive outcomes for the services, employees and the Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander Shire communities.

As the talks progressed a decision was made that, for now, both organisations would be best served continuing to operate as two entities. "The purpose of entering into formal Board merger discussions and beginning a due diligence process was to apply careful and thorough consideration to every aspect of the merger," Cobaw CEO, Margaret McDonald said.

"We both reluctantly agreed that, despite our similarities, our strategies for the future in our respective communities were different," said Ms McDonald.

The future is very bright for community health services and in the current climate, communities are best supported by a local place-based community health services focussed on the unique needs of communities.

CEO of CDCH, Anne Bates, said that there is a strong commitment from both organisations to ensure the continuation of locally-based, quality community health services. "We will continue to collaborate with Cobaw to serve the region and will draw upon the expertise in each of our organisations."

Both organisations are optimistic about the future opportunities to work together. "Our already positive working relationship has been strengthened by this experience and we will continue to support each other to provide quality services", Ms Bates said.

"Whilst it is disappointing that this proposed merger has not proven to be the solution we needed to meet our respective goals, we have made the right decision for the sustainability of community health services in our region," Ms McDonald concluded.

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