Media Release

The Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for the Coordination of Health and Human Services – COVID-19
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services

Thursday, 16 April 2020

EXTRA BEDS OPEN AT BENDIGO HEALTH FOR CORONAVIRUS

Bendigo Health has been given a major boost with 45 new hospital beds, as the Victorian Government bolsters the state's health system to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

Sixteen beds are already open, and the remaining beds are ready to open when they are needed. The new hospital also has built-in capacity for 20 additional intensive care beds if they are required in emergency situations.

The Government's $1.9 billion health fund has allowed the state's hospitals to build more bed capacity and recommission buildings that are no longer used for healthcare.

When complete, the health system's surge capacity will be boosted by more than 700 beds across Victoria, including at the former Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute, the former Geelong Private Hospital, Bendigo Hospital, Shepparton Hospital, the Alfred Hospital, Austin Hospital, Monash Medical Centre Clayton and Casey Hospital.

The investment also includes additional equipment for hospitals, funding for EDs and ICUs, additional resourcing for pandemic containment activities and support for workforce continuity throughout the pandemic.

The former Bendigo Health emergency department has also been converted into a dedicated screening clinic, providing the community with easy access to coronavirus testing. The clinic is testing around 40 people a day with capacity to scale up further if required.

For the latest information and advice on coronavirus visit dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos

"Our hospital admissions for coronavirus have remained steady so far thanks to the actions we've put in place to slow the spread – but this is not the time to become complacent."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan

"Our hospitals now have additional capacity right across the state to deal with this pandemic and so all Victorians can get the care they need – no matter their condition or where they live."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

"Thank you to our dedicated health professionals who are working around-the-clock on the frontline caring for the Bendigo community during the coronavirus pandemic."

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