

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier



Sunday, 26 July 2020

## SUPPORTING VICTORIA'S LAST LINE OF DEFENCE

Victoria's massive team of doctors, nurses and health care workers is growing every day as the fight to slow the spread of coronavirus continues.

In March, healthcare specialists, including retired doctors, nurses, midwives, patient care assistants, undergraduate students, paramedics and allied health professionals were being called on to return to work as part of the Victorian Government's coronavirus response.

The Government also sought assistance from patient care assistants, assistants-in-nursing and undergraduate students to provide essential support to our doctors, nurses and midwives.

Since then, more than 16,000 dedicated members of Victoria's health workforce have expressed their interest in working on the response.

We have over 4,000 current and retired nurses and midwives who have put up their hand to be part of Victoria's pandemic response and the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation has carried out workshops with nurses eager to return to the workforce.

Victoria now has over 800 skilled healthcare professionals from the Working for Victoria 'Health Portal' contracted to work in health services and other health care settings across the state, with hundreds more ready to be deployed.

Tomorrow, Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel will begin training with Ambulance Victoria – as troops partner with paramedics. This partnership will expand Ambulance Victoria's response capabilities by providing personnel where required to act as a second crew member that can support paramedics responding to the health crisis.

From tomorrow around 20 ADF personnel will begin a training program with paramedics, including driver training and proper PPE protocol. They will be then ready to hit the road to support our paramedics, wherever they are needed.

Ambulance Victoria has provided important surge support during the pandemic – more than 200 third year paramedic students and graduates on alternative duties are now assisting with contact tracing, and in May the Government fast tracked the recruitment of an additional 120 paramedics.

The Victorian Government has so far invested an additional \$1.9 billion in our health system as part of our coronavirus response, including more beds, ICU equipment and personal protective equipment to keep our dedicated health care workers safe.

### Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*"If we all follow the rules – we'll get through this. But those Victorians who do get sick should be assured we have a strong last line of defence, working around the clock to keep you and your families safe."*

*"To every member of our massive team who is fighting this deadly virus every day – I thank you. Every Victorian has the chance to thank them too, by staying apart, wearing a mask and if you're sick getting tested."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos

*"We never want our paramedics to have to choose between a coronavirus case or another serious health condition – whether it's fast tracking recruitment or more support on the way from the ADF, they won't have to."*