

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



Friday, 11 September 2020

HOSPITALS READY AND WAITING TO SUPPORT ALL VICTORIANS

Victorians are being urged to stop putting off hospital visits and important health checks during the coronavirus pandemic.

Hospitals and health agencies have seen a concerning drop in patients presenting to health services with time-critical cardiac and stroke conditions since the pandemic.

Visits to emergency department visits have fallen by at least 25 per cent compared to the same time last year.

Emergency department presentations for heart attack are down by 18 per cent and strokes by 24 per cent compared to the same time in 2019.

There has also been a noticeable reduction in screening, diagnosis and early treatment for cancers.

Reporting for the five most common cancers (colorectal, prostate, breast, melanoma and lung) have reduced by about a third, with an even greater reduction in reports for head and neck cancer. This is expected to lead to an increase in cancer diagnoses over the next 12 months and more patients presenting with later-stage incurable disease.

If Victorians have a pre-existing medical condition that requires regular treatment from a health professional, it is vital they continue with their usual management plan – including taking any normal medicines – to protect their health and avoid hospitalisation.

Hospitals and GP clinics are equipped with telehealth facilities, allowing patients to receive the very best care from the comfort of their home. Screening programs for breast, bowel and cervical cancer also continue to operate.

Our health services across the state have continued to provide timely care while dealing with unprecedented widescale measures to keep Victorians safe like physical distancing, new PPE and infection control procedures.

If you are concerned about any aspect of your health, visit a GP – and in an emergency, call 000 for ambulance assistance.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

“Victorians should remember if you need medical care – our health services are safe and ready to help you.”

“Our healthcare system has strict infection control processes in place – the risk of not getting medical attention you need far outweighs the risk of contracting coronavirus.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos

“Any delays in seeking help only lead to worse patient outcomes and potentially more time in hospital for Victorians. Seeking help early keeps you and your family safe and eases pressure on our hospital system.”

For more information call the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 or visit www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au