

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Foley MP**

Minister for the Coordination of Health and Human Services – COVID-19

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services

Minister for Equality



Wednesday, 4 November 2020

## HOSPITALS CONTINUE TO PERFORM THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

Victorian patients continued to receive the best quality treatment and support when they needed it most, despite our health services and healthcare workers dealing with a once in a century pandemic.

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Martin Foley today released Victoria's September quarter performance data, which shows our hard-working front-line workers continued to provide timely care even while dealing with unprecedented widescale measures to keep Victorians safe.

The latest Victorian health service and ambulance performance data shows doctors and nurses in our emergency departments treated 100 per cent of the most urgent Category 1 patients immediately on arrival at the hospital.

It also shows that even though most Category 2 and all Category 3 elective surgery was cancelled as hospitals dealt with the pandemic, 99.99 per cent Category 1 urgent elective surgery patients received their operations within the target 30 days – half of them within 10 days.

Even with the focus on responding to the coronavirus peak, our health care workers maintained their high levels of performance, particularly for the most seriously ill and injured patients.

Ambulance Victoria reached 82.3 per cent of Code 1 urgent cases within the benchmark of 15 minutes, with an average response time of 11 minutes 37 seconds – well under the 15 minute target. This is an improvement on 81.6 per cent in the June quarter, when ambulances reached Code 1 cases in an average 11 minutes and 47 seconds.

Victoria's ambulances transported 68,666 Code 1 emergency patients in the three months to the end of September – 1760 more than the previous quarter.

The report also shows 362,833 people attended our hospital EDs in the September quarter, down by 116,297 on the same quarter in 2019.

Coronavirus stay-at-home restrictions also led to fewer vehicles on the road and fewer crashes, restrictions on sport led to fewer sports injuries, while enhanced physical distancing and hand hygiene protocols led to fewer illnesses. There was also a decline in patients presenting with minor ailments as they heeded the message to stay at home.

High vaccination levels and diligent observance of physical distancing and hand hygiene protocols led to a vastly reduced flu season in 2020 compared with the unprecedented 2019 winter, which put huge strain on our hospitals.

In 2020 there have been 4769 laboratory-confirmed cases, compared with more than 65,000 for the same time in 2019, which included more than 18,500 children. The report shows that 66,242 people are on the list for elective surgery, following the pause of less-urgent surgery during the pandemic.

With both regional and metropolitan Melbourne hospitals now back 85 per cent of usual services, the Victorian Government will ramp up an elective surgery blitz to address wait times as soon as it's safe to do so.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Martin Foley

*"Our health system has proven to be well-prepared, adaptable and resilient during one of toughest years we've ever faced – we thank every single health service for supporting Victorians through this pandemic."*

*"The latest performance data shows just how hard working our healthcare workers really are – they've done an incredible job ensuring that even during a pandemic, Victorians continue to receive world class care."*

**Media contact:** Rania Spooner 0436 019 993 | [rania.spooner@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:rania.spooner@minstaff.vic.gov.au)