

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Foley MP**

Minister for Health  
Minister for Ambulance Services  
Minister for Equality



Saturday, 14 November 2020

## **BETTER AT HOME – MORE SUPPORT TO RECOVER AT HOME**

The Andrews Labor Government will give more patients the opportunity to recover from illness or surgery at home in the comfort and familiarity of family and friends, as part of the new Better at Home initiative.

The Victorian Budget 2020/21 will spend \$120.9 million over three years on the program to meet growing demand for healthcare through increased delivery of hospital services in patients' homes.

This investment will include \$102.6 million to provide a range of different types of care at home, including clinic appointments, chemotherapy, post-surgical care and rehabilitation – making a real difference to people's lives.

Virtual care technology will be boosted through a \$12.5 million investment to sustain the high rates of telehealth we have achieved during the pandemic, and support the development of innovative new models of 21<sup>st</sup> century care.

A further \$5.8 million will help health services to engage the clinical workforce in this transformation of care in Victoria, through training, support, and clinical redesign which will provide more options to receive care at home.

Through Better at Home, up to 50,000 chemotherapy appointments could be delivered in living rooms across Victoria, or 50,000 days Victorians previously spent in hospital recovering or undertaking rehabilitation can be done from the comfort of home – freeing up around 160 hospital beds.

The initiative will also improve quality of care, enabling patients to choose to recover in a familiar environment, rather than in hospital if they prefer.

Clinical evidence shows patients achieve better outcomes at home, where they avoid the physical deterioration, sleep disruption and social isolation associated with hospital stays.

The growth of telehealth during the coronavirus pandemic will also benefit from the Better at Home initiative, with more consultations able to be done with recovering patients through electronic channels.

Through the initiative funding will be available for health services to design and implement shared service models for home-based and virtual care, enabling them to upscale and specialise quickly.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley**

*"The coronavirus pandemic has been extremely hard on Victorians, but we've also seen it inspire some innovative, more effective ways of caring for people – we want to ensure these programs remain available to Victorians."*

*"Expanding the Better at Home program will mean many patients, particularly in regional Victoria will have better outcomes because they can recover or do their rehab in the comfort and familiar surroundings of their own home"*

*"Through this initiative Hospitals and health services will be equipped with even more telehealth facilities, allowing patients to receive the very best care from the comfort of their home and without having to travel."*