

Media Release

Steve McGhie MP
Parliamentary Secretary for Health



Friday, 29 January 2021

PARAMEDIC BOOST TO BOLSTER CARE AND COVERAGE IN VICTORIA

The Andrews Labor Government is giving regional and rural Victoria better access to emergency care with a \$14.8 million funding boost for Ambulance Victoria.

Parliamentary Secretary for Health Steve McGhie announced the extra funding today, which will mean more paramedics and more ambulances on the road in the coming months, with additional Peak Period Units (PPUs) being deployed across Victoria, including in regional growth areas such as Bendigo.

The funding will deliver four new PPU's for Ambulance Victoria in the Bellarine Peninsula, Eaglehawk, Churchill and Gisborne from next month, bringing these initiatives forward from 2022-23.

The PPU's will help manage growing demand in these areas, ensuring the right patients receive the right care at the right time.

Other rural areas to get extra resources include Benalla, Lakes Entrance, Torquay, Castlemaine, Bannockburn (for night shifts, providing 24-hour coverage) and Daylesford converting from on call to 24-hour on shift coverage.

The Beechworth branch will also convert from single paramedic to dual paramedic crewing, and the Chiltern team will convert to a single paramedic on call location with Ambulance Community Officer support.

Seven additional PPU's will also be provided to the metropolitan region this financial year. These will start at Epping, Tarneit, Mernda, Craigieburn, Boronia, Templestowe and Bayside, further improving the emergency care these communities receive.

As part of the boost, 20 graduate paramedics have already started working across Victoria, with a further 20 scheduled in February and another 37 graduates will start in March to fill rural vacancies.

The funding will also see twelve extra triage practitioners employed in Ambulance Victoria's triage services, providing more alternative care pathways to Victorians who don't need a lights and sirens ambulance response.

Quote attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Health Steve McGhie

"This funding will see even more paramedics employed across the state, as well as extra ambulance units and surge shifts, and better referral service capacity."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan

"Our paramedics do a fantastic job for the community and this extra resourcing will give them the extra support they need to ensure Bendigo residents get the care they need, when they need it."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

"It's crucial that Victorians have the timely medical services they need no matter where they live – and we are delivering greater access so patients don't have to wait."