

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
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BOOST FOR DENTAL CATCH-UP CARE

The Andrews Labor Government is ensuring that more Victorians are getting the dental care they need, where they live – with more “catch-up” care beginning in January.

A new \$27 million package to deliver more check-ups and treatments will kick off right across Victoria and run until June.

This funding will help public dental providers catch up and meet increased demand for dental services – targeting waiting lists and providing immediate access to public dental services and treatment for Victorians who have delayed or deferred treatment during the pandemic.

The package will reach every corner of the state and help an additional 40,000 Victorians get the check-ups and treatments they need.

This funding boost is in addition to the Labor Government’s Smile Squad program which will provide free dental care for students at all government primary and secondary schools, and is rolling out across Victoria now.

This additional dental funding is part of the Labor Government’s \$91 million investment over four years for responding to community-based healthcare demand, which has increased because of deferred care during the pandemic.

The funding will be directed to catch-up care for dental services, cancer services and maternal and child health services to ensure clients who were unable to engage over the past 12 months receive the care they need.

The Labor Government has invested a record \$360 million into oral health in the *Victorian Budget 2020/21*.

However there is more to do – which is why Victoria together with other jurisdictions – are calling on the Commonwealth to properly fund dental services and are continuing to advocate for long-term, sustainable funding arrangements as well as a reversal of their 30 per cent cut to public dental services.

Quotes attributable to Health Minister Martin Foley

“Good dental health is critical for good overall health – that’s why we are taking action to give Victorians across the state access to catch-up dental care and slash our waiting lists.”

“We know that a lot of Victorians delayed health care throughout the pandemic – including dental check-ups and treatment – this will help dentists treat more than 40,000 Victorians and get them off the waiting list.”

“But we know there is more to do, which is why it is critical that the Commonwealth Government reverses their 30 per cent funding reduction in public dental services and commits to a long-term funding arrangement.”