

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



Friday, 6 May 2022

DELIVERING STRONGER HEALTH SERVICES IN MILDURA

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering the best healthcare for families in the Mildura and the Mallee region with more than \$9.7 million in upgrades and replacement medical equipment at Mildura Base Public Hospital.

Minister for Health Martin Foley today visited the hospital to mark the completion of a new paediatric unit, negative pressure room, operating theatre upgrades and the arrival of a new ultrasound machine.

Funded through the second round of the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund (RHIF), the new \$3.8 million paediatric unit includes eight beds, a nurses' station, treatment rooms and telehealth facilities – which has supported the hospital's COVID response, including being used as a respiratory ward.

The Labor Government's \$790 million RHIF provides government funding to rural and regional health services and is the largest program of its type in Victoria having funded more than 480 projects since 2016.

The program received a \$300 million boost in the *Victorian Budget 2022/23*, meaning local health services across the Mildura and Mallee Region, including Mallee District Aboriginal Services, Mallee Track Health and Community Service and Women's Health Loddon Mallee, will be able to apply for funding for infrastructure projects and equipment upgrades.

The hospital also received \$300,000 to upgrade operating tables and theatre lights and more than \$200,000 in funding has turned an existing single patient room in the medical ward into a negative pressure isolation room.

The new isolation room means patients experiencing respiratory conditions can be cared for safely while freeing up Mildura Base Hospital's ICU for the region's sickest patients.

The latest round of the RHIF is providing more than \$5.3 million in funding for a major theatre upgrade which will overhaul Mildura Base Hospital's Central Sterile Services Department. The process to appoint a builder is underway.

The latest round of the Medical Equipment Replacement Program has delivered a \$310,000 ultrasound unit for Mildura Base Public Hospital's operating suite – meaning local patients needing biopsies and gynaecology or obstetrics services can receive treatment locally.

Since 2015-16 the Labor Government has invested more than \$30 million in improving facilities at Mildura Base Public Hospital. This includes more than \$2.4 million to expand the hospital's ICU, more than \$29,000 for a new ECT machine and the return of the Mildura Base Hospital to public ownership in August 2019 – where it rightly belongs.

To support the future health needs of the local community, the Government is progressing a Master Plan which is on track to be completed in mid-2022. The Master Plan is assessing the feasibility of expanding the existing hospital while comparing this with developing a second hospital campus elsewhere.

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"Everyone deserves access to quality health care facilities and services – we're ensuring Victorians living in Mildura and the Mallee region have exactly that close to home."

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Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Mark Gepp

“We’ve delivered more than \$30 million in funding to support the operations of Mildura Base Public Hospital and we will continue to build on this strong record.”