

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier



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## MORE GP RESPIRATORY CLINICS TO EASE PRESSURE ON HOSPITALS

The Andrews Labor Government is giving Victorians more ways to get help when they need it most – delivering 26 new GP respiratory clinics across the state, with two more to open soon.

The \$54 million investment is part of a range of measures aimed at relieving pressures in busy emergency departments, by providing important care close to home and preventing avoidable visits to hospital.

The respiratory clinics allow patients with low to moderate symptoms to receive free and immediate treatment for a range of respiratory conditions such as asthma, influenza and pneumonia. The opening of additional clinics comes at a vital time, with almost 30,000 cases of the flu already reported in Victoria this year – a 30 per cent increase from the last pre-COVID flu season in 2019.

Operating up to 16 hours a day, seven days a week, the service is free for people of all ages, with or without a Medicare card. Telehealth options are also available for COVID positive patients or those unable to travel to a clinic. The clinics are staffed by qualified clinicians, including GPs and nurses, who are well equipped to provide immediate support to patients.

20 clinics opened earlier in the year with an additional six recently opened, including in Mitcham, Northcote, Melton, Hoppers Crossing and Lilydale. All metropolitan clinics are now open and two others in Mildura and Warrnambool will open soon.

This investment will see a total of 53 respiratory clinics across the state, including Commonwealth-funded clinics. 36 clinics are in metropolitan Melbourne and 17 clinics in regional Victoria – ensuring all Victorians have access to the free service.

The respiratory clinics add to a range of initiatives funded by the Labor Government to ease pressure on hospitals and ambulance services – including the expansion of virtual triage services, increased investment in the *Better at Home* and *Covid Positive Pathways* programs and the recruitment of hundreds of new paramedics.

To access a list of respiratory clinic locations, visit [health.vic.gov.au/covid-19/gp-respiratory-clinics-and-hospital-respiratory-clinics-covid-19](https://health.vic.gov.au/covid-19/gp-respiratory-clinics-and-hospital-respiratory-clinics-covid-19).

### Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*“By further expanding this free, high-quality service, even more Victorians can now receive treatment and care for respiratory conditions close to home.”*

*“To keep the pressure off our hospitals we’re continuing to look at alternative options for non-urgent conditions – opening more of these clinics is just one of the ways we’re doing that.”*

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

*“This winter has highlighted the importance of a strong primary care network and we need to ensure that Victorians can access the appropriate medical support without having to go to an emergency department.”*

*“We’re also providing immediate short-term solutions through the expansion of virtual triage services, recruiting more paramedics and investment in services like the Better at Home program.”*

**Media contact:** Jamila Fontana 0409 741 279 | [jamila.fontana@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:jamila.fontana@minstaff.vic.gov.au)