

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier



Thursday, 11 August 2022

## NEW PUBLIC SURGERY CENTRE TO OPEN FOR VICTORIANS

Victorians needing elective surgery will get the tailored care they need faster, thanks to a new public surgery centre set to open in Melbourne's east later this year.

The Andrews Labor Government will transform Bellbird Private Hospital in Blackburn into a dedicated public elective surgery centre. When it's operational, the new centre help more than 5,700 Victorians get the surgical care they need each year.

The centre will be operated by Eastern Health and consist of four operating theatres, a ten-bed day procedure unit, 43 inpatient beds and offer a range of services including gynaecology and general surgery.

All 95 of the hard-working nurses, allied health professionals, technical and patient support staff currently working at Bellbird Private Hospital will be offered equivalent ongoing roles with Eastern Health, to retain their skills and expertise for when the new centre opens.

This is the second private hospital repurposed by the Labor Government as a planned surgery centre, with Frankston Private Hospital on track to transition into a public health service in September. Together, once fully operational, the two facilities will deliver close to 15,000 surgeries each year.

This latest initiative is just one of many under the Labor Government's \$1.5 billion *COVID Catch Up Plan* – the state's long-term strategy to reform the elective surgery system so every Victorian family can get the care they need, when they need it most.

The plan will deliver more surgery than ever before by bolstering staffing and resources state-wide to better coordinate and streamline surgical activity across the system.

These investments will gradually build up to deliver a record 240,000 surgeries every year by 2024 – an additional 40,000 procedures annually compared to pre-pandemic levels.

The plan includes funding for 400 nurses to complete postgraduate training in perioperative nursing, 1,000 nurses to upskill in general surgery and recovery and the upskilling 30 theatre and sterilisation technicians.

It's also delivering eight new Rapid Access Hubs – which exclusively perform specific surgeries such as hernia repairs, cataract surgeries and joint replacements – and more 'public-in-private' partnerships to maximise private hospital capacity and generate more bed availability.

### Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*"The dedicated Blackburn Public Surgical Centre will mean more patients get the care they need, close to home."*

*"We have a clear plan to support our nurses, doctors and paramedics to deliver the best care for their patients with major boosts to hospitals, increased support for our health workforce and more home-based services."*

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

*"The global pandemic has put health systems around the country under unprecedented pressure – Victoria is no different. We have a clear plan to catch up on elective surgeries deferred due to COVID-19 and ensure patients are treated as quickly as possible."*

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