

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services



Wednesday, 5 October 2022

SURGERY CAPACITY DOUBLED AT ARARAT HOSPITAL

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering the best healthcare for families in the Grampians, with more than \$8.7 million in upgrades at East Grampians Health Service's Ararat Hospital now complete.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas visited Ararat Hospital today to see the multi-million-dollar project, which has redeveloped and expanded the hospital's theatre, radiology and pathology services, and relocated palliative care services.

Funded through the Labor Government's *Regional Health Infrastructure Fund*, funding has added a second fully operational theatre which will double East Grampians Health Service's perioperative capability to reduce waiting lists in the region.

The new theatre started operations on Monday and means that more than 900 people annually can get surgery every year, closer to home.

Funding has also increased the number of day procedure beds from six to eight and recovery beds from three to four. An upgraded Central Sterile Supply Department (CSSD) is giving the dedicated doctors and nurses at Ararat Hospital the reusable medical equipment they need to get more people off waiting lists and into surgery.

To improve access and efficiency the health services' radiology, pathology and medical imaging department have been being transformed to meet increased demand. Funding has also relocated the palliative care service, delivering greater privacy for families.

The Labor Government established the *Regional Health Infrastructure Fund* in 2016/17 to help regional and rural health services to improve the safety and quality of services, service capacity, models of care, patient and staff amenity and service efficiency. It has since funded more than 480 infrastructure projects.

The Regional Health Infrastructure Fund received a further boost in the *Victorian Budget 2022/23* with an additional \$300 million bringing total funding to \$790 million.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"We're investing in hospitals right across the state and our dedicated doctors, nurses, other hospital staff and patients are all set to benefit – including right here in our Grampians community."

"Since inception, the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund has funded more than 480 health infrastructure projects. This funding continues to invest in our local hospitals and health services – and the health of all Victorians no matter where they live."

Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Jaala Pulford

"Families in and around Grampians will now be able to access more care and support close to home thanks to the Andrews Labor Government's continued investment in our region's healthcare system."