

# Media Release

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



Friday, 21 October 2022

## MORE ACCESS TO FREE HEALTHCARE ACROSS VICTORIA

The Andrews Labor Government is making sure more Victorians can access free healthcare close to home, with locations for the remaining 10 GP-led Priority Primary Care Centres revealed.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today visited the Sunshine Priority Primary Care Centre (PPCC) – the second of the Labor Government’s 25 new centres to open, providing people with faster care for urgent but non-critical conditions while freeing up important hospital resources for patients with more serious needs.

In addition to the 15 sites already announced, the final 10 centres are being commissioned in partnership with local Primary Health Networks and will be established in partnership with:

- St Vincent’s Hospital
- Maroondah Hospital
- Goulburn Valley Health
- Footscray Hospital
- The Royal Children’s Hospital
- Mildura Base Public Hospital
- University Hospital Geelong
- Royal Melbourne Hospital – Sunbury (satellite)
- Northern Health – Craigieburn/Roxburgh Park (satellite)
- West Gippsland Healthcare Group – Warragul

The sites for each of the 25 centres were selected following careful consideration of population, community needs and emergency department demand.

The new locations add to sites already previously announced in areas such as Frankston, Bendigo, Box Hill, Werribee and Dandenong.

It’s expected the new Sunshine PPCC will help treat about 300 patients per week, giving families in Melbourne’s west another option to receive care.

Staffed with both GPs and nurses, the centres can treat patients on a pre-booked or walk-up basis and are well equipped to handle a range of conditions such as mild infections, fractures and burns, in addition to diagnostic services including pathology and medical imaging.

Thanks to a \$70.8 million Labor Government investment, the service is free to all Victorians – with or without a Medicare card – operating for expanded opening hours, seven days a week and up to 16 hours a day.

Victorian emergency departments continue to be busier than ever and the 25 new PPCCs are just part of a range of initiatives to reduce and take pressure off our busy EDs.

The Government is also expanding the Virtual ED and Better at Home Programs, as well as 30 state-funded GP respiratory clinics and Chief GP Adviser role.

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

*“Expanding primary care options is critical to giving Victorians greater access to affordable healthcare and this free service is just one of the ways we’re doing that.”*

*“These centres progressively opening across the state – both in the cities and our growing regional centres – will provide enormous relief to our EDs and free up critical resources for those who need it most.”*

### Quote attributable to Member for St Albans Natalie Suleyman

**Media contact:** Alex Sheehy 0420 314 221 | alex.sheehy@minstaff.vic.gov.au

*“Not all medical needs are emergencies and these PPCCs provide a service for local families to get the timely attention without going to an ED. Importantly, I’d like to thank all our local GPs for the support and work they’re doing for our community.”*