

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier



Tuesday, 14 March 2023

## DELIVERING MORE SURGERY IN MELBOURNE'S WEST

Hundreds more patients in Melbourne's west will get the elective surgery they need sooner – thanks to the Andrews Labor Government's \$1.5 billion *COVID Catch Up Plan*.

Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today visited the newly opened Werribee Rapid Access Hub (RAH), one of eight new hubs funded by the Labor Government to boost surgery capacity and see patients sooner across Victoria.

The new RAH features upgraded endoscopy suites and will see some 800 endoscopy procedures performed between now and June. These procedures often serve as an important diagnostic tool for doctors, allowing them to inspect their patients and put them on track for any further necessary treatments or surgeries.

The Werribee RAH is the fourth RAH to open, with similar facilities up and running at Broadmeadows Hospital and Sandringham Hospital, in addition to the first of five theatres in operation at St Vincent's on the Park. Hubs at Peter Mac, University Hospital Geelong, Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital and the Royal Women's Hospital will open later this year.

RAHs allow hospitals to streamline their services, freeing up operating theatres, ward capacity and staff.

As a result of the increased capacity, Werribee Mercy Hospital will be able to take on patients from other health services including Western Health and Royal Melbourne Hospital – ensuring they get the care they need, sooner.

The new RAH will also free up capacity to allow surgeons from the Royal Children's Hospital to do day surgery for local children at Werribee – ensuring kids in Wyndham get the care they need, close to home.

The RAHs are part of Victoria's *COVID Catch Up Plan* – our long-term strategy to reform the surgery system and build a better health system for the future so every Victorian can get the care they need, when they need it.

The Labor Government invested \$1.5 billion to train staff, improve facilities and deliver the latest equipment to complete more surgery now and into the future.

This is in addition to our almost \$110 million emergency department expansion currently underway at Werribee – which will double capacity and allow an extra 25,000 patients to be treated each year once complete in 2025.

### Quote attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

*"We're already seeing the positive impact of our COVID-Catch Up Plan and rapid access hubs with more surgery being delivered, close to home – making sure every Victorian gets the care they need."*

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

*"Our new Rapid Access Hubs are not only allowing more patients to get the treatment they need faster, they're ensuring we deliver on our long-term reform plans to deliver more surgery than ever before."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Werribee Tim Pallas

*"The nurses and doctors at Werribee Mercy Hospital do an amazing job – the new Rapid Access Hub and expanded emergency department will ensure they can continue to deliver the best possible care to our community."*

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