

# Media Release

**The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP**

Leader of the House

Minister for Health

Minister for Health Infrastructure

Minister for Medical Research



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## HOLOLENS EXPANDING VIRTUAL CARE IN REGIONAL VICTORIA

The Andrews Labor Government is investing in new and innovative ways to make sure Victorians living in rural areas of the state have great access to high-quality specialist care, close to home.

Backed by the Labor Government's *Better at Home* initiative, residents across East Gippsland can now access care through the rollout of the HoloLens - which provides virtual care to rural and regional Victorians in their own communities.

Worn as a headset by a nurse and virtually guided by a doctor in a separate location, HoloLens is a mixed-reality holographic computer that gives patients a level of care much closer to an in-person examination than a regular telehealth appointment.

It allows specialists to examine the patient virtually, with a range of inbuilt overlays such as mapping technology where they can trace the extent of a wound, assess how an infection or injury is healing and use their index fingers to draw virtual diagrams.

Traditionally used in the military, construction and even in video gaming, the recent trial of HoloLens in East Gippsland is believed to be the first use of this technology in a virtual care setting.

Under the trial by Bairnsdale Regional Health Service local patients attended holographic consulting rooms at a number of bush nursing centres and other health services across East Gippsland.

Following the successful trial, 11 new HoloLens devices have been deployed across East Gippsland with 25 clinicians now trained in its use for enhanced telehealth, with home visits for HoloLens treatment to be rolled out soon.

Supported by an almost \$80,000 investment by the Labor Government – this innovation is giving more patients the opportunity to recover from illness or surgery in the comfort of their own home.

This is all part of the Labor Government's \$698 million expansion of *Better at Home* – to deliver care at home where patients are most comfortable and free up hospital beds for patients that need them most.

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

*"Patients recover much better at home, but that's only possible if we're providing them with high-quality healthcare services right at their doorstep."*

*"That's why we're making investments in technology like the HoloLens - so more rural and regional Victorians can get the specialist care they need either in their community."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh

*"It's great to see Bairnsdale Regional Health Service embrace new technology like this to make sure even the most remote communities are getting the best possible care."*