

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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MAJOR BOOST INTO CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH

Fighting childhood cancer is a battle no family should have to face – but it’s a terrifying reality for hundreds of kids every year.

The Andrews Labor Government is doing what matters to help treat and cure childhood cancer, establishing Victoria as a global leader in paediatric cancer research – with \$35 million in the *Victorian Budget 2023/24* to launch the Victorian Paediatric Cancer Consortium (VPCC).

The VPCC will revolutionise childhood cancer treatments and give more children the chance to grow up happy and healthy – while also helping childhood cancer survivors manage their long-term health.

The Labor Government’s investment will be matched by an additional \$10 million from the Children’s Cancer Foundation, to form a \$45 million investment package to be rolled out over the next five years.

We’ll keep bringing together the best and brightest minds from leading children’s hospitals, research institutes and universities, working together to fight childhood cancer as the VPCC.

This consortium will develop cancer therapies through research and clinical trial programs for the youngest cancer sufferers, helping to save lives. It will also help survivors manage their long-term health, supporting them to lead long and fulfilling lives.

It will support research in paediatric cancer therapies, pharmacogenomics and radiogenomics, a childhood cancer survivorship program, bioresource research platform, and paediatric cancer physician researcher training.

Despite all the research and recent breakthroughs in children’s cancer, too many of the youngest Victorians still get sick.

The Labor Government has delivered the brand new ‘Wombat’ ward at the Royal Children’s Hospital which will help more Victorian kids – including those undergoing cancer treatment – get the care they need in the best facilities.

Opened earlier this month, the ward offers 24/7 care across its 30 beds, giving more than 2,700 extra children the care they need every year – a significant boost to RCH’s world-class acute paediatric inpatient care capacity.

This is just the first step in the Labor Government’s \$49.4 million multi-stage expansion of RCH, with the second stage to build a bigger and better emergency department with 20 additional treatment spaces underway.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Medical Research Mary-Anne Thomas

“The VPCC will revolutionise research into childhood cancer – leading to earlier diagnosis, better treatments and less heartbreak for families.”

“We’re proud to have opened the new Wombat ward at our iconic Royal Children’s Hospital – supporting more Victorian kids every single year to get the best possible care from our hardworking doctors and nurses.”

“Victoria is a world leader in medical research – this investment will support some of the best and brightest minds to work together to fight childhood cancer.”

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