

# Media Release

**The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP**

Leader of the House

Minister for Health

Minister for Health Infrastructure

Minister for Medical Research



Monday, 4 September 2023

## NEW VICTORIAN WOMEN'S HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Andrews Labor Government has appointed Victoria's first Women's Health Advisory Council, putting women's health at the heart of Government's focus – ensuring it has funding and respect it deserves.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today chaired the first meeting of Council members who will provide independent advice on the delivery of our women's health package, including how to improve women's health outcomes, reduce gender health disparities, enhance research and strengthen the safety and quality of care.

The establishment of the Advisory Council coincides with Women's Health Week, which this year encourages women and girls to 'Grow your knowledge' – supporting women to make informed decisions about their health with information that's easy to understand.

The Council will play a key role in providing independent advice on the implementation of the women's health package the Labor Government promised to Victorians at last year's election, supported by an investment of \$153 million in the *Victorian Budget 2023/24*.

As part of the package, the Government is establishing 20 new women's health clinics to provide free comprehensive care and support for Victorian women experiencing conditions like endometriosis, pelvic pain and the symptoms of perimenopause and menopause.

The following people will join the Council and will serve a fixed four-year term:

- Nicole Bartholomeusz
- Maree Cuddihy
- Jill Gallagher AO
- Madeleine Harradence
- Dianne Hill
- Prof Sue Matthews
- Nadia Mattiazzo
- Prof Danelle Mazza AM
- Dr Adele Murdolo
- Dr Kate Seear
- Katherine Stanley
- Prof Beverley Vollenhoven
- Dr Sarah White

The appointees bring a wealth of professional and lived experience in women's health – and all Victorian women will have the chance to lead and inform the direction of women's health reform by sharing their experiences.

This month, Victorian women will be invited to share their healthcare experiences by completing a survey on the Engage Victoria website - [engage.vic.gov.au/lets-talk-about-improving-womens-health-in-victoria](https://engage.vic.gov.au/lets-talk-about-improving-womens-health-in-victoria).

The Labor Government is also launching a new grants program to provide funding for non-government women's health organisations to deliver women's support groups – which provide safe environments for women to support each other, learn from each other's lived experiences and access evidence-based health information.

For more information, visit [health.vic.gov.au/public-health/womens-health-advisory-council](https://health.vic.gov.au/public-health/womens-health-advisory-council) and [health.vic.gov.au/womens-health-and-wellbeing-support-groups-and-programs-grants](https://health.vic.gov.au/womens-health-and-wellbeing-support-groups-and-programs-grants)

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

*"Listening to the experiences of women is fundamental to the success of our women's health package and will inform the improvements we want to make to women's health in Victoria."*

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**Quote attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Women's Health Kat Theophanous**

*"I'm honoured to serve as Deputy Chair of this council to embed equity into our health system and transform the way women access the support and treatment they need and deserve."*