

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Leader of the House
Minister for Health
Minister for Health Infrastructure
Minister for Ambulance Services



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FIRST LOOK AT GEELONG'S NEW SURGERY HUB

Thousands more patients across Geelong will soon get the surgery they need with works for the new surgery hub now complete at University Hospital - thanks to the Labor Government's *COVID Catch Up Plan*.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today visited Victoria's first regional Rapid Access Hub at the hospital's Youang Surgery Centre which will soon help deliver up to 2,300 extra procedures every year.

The Labor Government invested \$5 million to establish the new Hub, which will provide a range of specialist services, including general surgery as well as plastic surgery, ear nose and throat surgery and dental procedures.

Featuring a new surgery theatre and spaces for patients to recover, the new hub will allow more than 700 procedures to move out of the main hospital - creating more capacity for both emergency and planned surgery in the main hospital.

With the hub dedicated to planned surgery – it will relieve pressure on the hospital's main theatres, ensuring they can focus on emergency or complex surgery, helping drive down waitlists.

With hubs already up and running at Sandringham Hospital, Broadmeadows Hospital, Werribee Mercy Hospital and St Vincent's on the Park, Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, the Geelong site is the first regional facility under the Rapid Access Hub project.

Remaining two hubs will also open at the Royal Women's Hospital and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre by the end of the year.

A key initiative of the Labor Government's \$1.5 billion *COVID Catch Up Plan*, Rapid Access Hubs allow hospitals to streamline their services, freeing up operating theatres, ward capacity and staff – delivering more surgery now and into the future.

The latest quarterly performance data shows these investments are making a real difference in getting patients the surgery they need quicker, with 51,361 patients admitted for planned surgery last quarter alone and the waiting list reducing by a further 3.3 per cent.

While work continues to further bring down waitlists, Patient Support Units across 23 sites have supported 26,000 patients to be better prepared for surgery, helping to reduce their length of stay in hospital and risk of post-surgical complications.

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

"Geelong's new surgery hub will help more patients get the care they need sooner and ensure we're delivering on our long-term plan to deliver more surgery than ever before."

"Our COVID Catch Up Plan is making a real difference, and initiatives like the rapid access hubs will see us continue to get the waiting list down."

Quote attributable to Member for Geelong Chris Couzens

"This hub will create more capacity at the hospital and reduce wait times, ensuring all Geelong residents get the surgery they need sooner."

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Quote attributable to Member for Lara Ella George

“This new addition to University Hospital Geelong will make a huge difference, allowing thousands more surgeries for thousands of people.”

Quote attributable to Member for South Barwon Darren Cheeseman

“The new Rapid Access Hub will ensure locals get the surgeries they need and allow staff to continue their essential work across other sections of the hospital.”

Quote attributable to Member for Bellarine Alison Marchant

“New surgery theatres and recovery spaces in this hub ensures our residents get the best care during and after their surgery.”