

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Health

Minister for Health Infrastructure

Minister for Ambulance Services



Wednesday, 13 December 2023

REFORM TO BETTER PROTECT VICTORIANS

The Allan Labor Government will strengthen and reform health regulation in Victoria -- to better protect Victorians and provide greater consistency to regulation across the health system.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today announced a new body – the Health Regulator will be established.

The Department of Health regulates thousands of professionals, organisations and businesses across the state, covering everything from the regulation of poisons, tobacco and food safety.

These functions will be unified as part of a new stronger model which better reflects the current needs of the Victorian community.

It will centralise regulatory expertise within the Department, allowing it to respond more rapidly – and allocate appropriate resources – to key priority areas.

The new Health Regulator will have responsibilities for medicines and poisons, health service facilities, safe drinking water, tobacco and e-cigarettes, food safety, child safety, radiation safety, legionella risk management and pest control.

Major reforms will also be developed to modernise the regulation of assisted reproductive treatment (ART) by transferring responsibility for regulation of from the Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority (VARTA) to the new Health Regulator which will have tougher powers for enforcement.

These reforms will bring regulation of ART in line with how other health treatments are regulated and inline with how other jurisdictions regulate fertility care.

It will also deliver on recommendations from the Gorton Review which advised the Government there was a need to clarify the role, purpose and functions of the regulator and strengthen the regulation of fertility treatment.

The review also recommended the need for a regulator with more extensive compliance and enforcement powers– including strengthened inspection and investigation powers and powers to issue compliance notices, which will be delivered as part of legislative reform to ensure the new Regulator has the powers it needs to keep Victorians safe.

This reform is delivering on the Department of Health’s regulatory vision which aims to improve health regulatory outcomes across the state.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

“These reforms are all about keeping Victorians safe and ensuring they have a modern health regulator looking out for them.”

“These reforms will create a super-team of regulators ready to respond to matters right across the health sector, and ensuring the best resources are available where they are needed.”

“The Health Regulator will be better placed than ever to ensure that all health operators are keeping patients safe.”

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