

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Health

Minister for Health Infrastructure

Minister for Ambulance Services



Friday, 2 February 2024

KEEPING OUR PARAMEDICS AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF CARE

The Allan Labor Government is ensuring our paramedics have the skills they need to continue delivering world-class care, with Victoria University (VU) to match our investment in a new cutting-edge training facility.

Visiting the site of the future Centre of Excellence in Paramedicine, Minister for Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas announced VU will invest an additional \$10 million, bringing the total investment into the centre to \$20 million.

Providing paramedics with quality training is essential in ensuring they can meet the needs of the Victorian community as they face record demand.

On track to open in 2026, the Australian-first centre will feature high-tech training equipment, life-size replicas of environments for paramedics to practice simulated emergencies - with the first of these set-ups, a replica 'on the road' ambulance already installed and being used by trainees to practice for real-life conditions.

The new centre will also serve as a hub for paramedics already working with Ambulance Victoria to improve their skills, learn new techniques, and stay up to date with the latest in best practice.

The boost to the future paramedic workforce comes as the Government releases the latest health performance data which shows demand on our paramedics remains high.

This quarter the number of Code 1 call outs rose by 3.4 per cent to a total of 99,833 - making it the second busiest quarter in the history of Ambulance Victoria.

Despite this increased demand, Code 1 performance has improved with 67.3 per cent responded to within 15 minutes, compared to 60.2 per cent during the same time last year.

The average Code 1 response time is now 14 minutes and 58 seconds down from 15 minutes and 12 seconds last quarter - with the average ambulance response time down almost two minutes from a year ago.

Wait times at Victoria's emergency departments continue to drop, down six minutes when compared to pre-pandemic wait times - despite demand for care increasing with 485,341 presentations this quarter, up 2.5 per cent from the previous quarter.

Our investments in the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department and Priority Primary Care Centres are also helping alleviate demand by diverting non-urgent patients away from emergency departments - having managed close to 506,000 presentations combined to date.

The planned surgery wait list also continues to fall as the Labor Government's \$1.5 billion *COVID Catch Up Plan* continues to roll out delivering Rapid Access Hubs, Patient Support Units and new public surgery centres in Frankston and Blackburn - with the list decreasing to 67,207 following the treatment of 50,698 patients.

99.9% of Category 1 patients received their surgery in the clinically recommended timeframes – while the median wait times improved by 129 days for Category 3 (non-urgent) patients and 60 days for Category 2 (semi-urgent) patients, compared to the same time last year.

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Quotes attributable to Minister for Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas

“The latest data makes it clear that despite record levels of demand, our dedicated healthcare workers are making sure Victorians continue to get the care they need.”

“This new Centre for Excellence in Paramedicine will be a home of the latest technology and make sure our paramedics are getting the training they need to deliver the care Victorians deserve.”

Quotes attributable to the Honourable Steve Bracks AC Chancellor of Victoria University

“We are excited to announce our co-investment for Australia’s first Centre of Excellence in Paramedicine, a unique place of learning that will support, encourage and generate a skilled and resilient workforce to meet the needs of our community.

“Victoria University has paved the way for industry partnerships, which has seen a thriving alliance with Ambulance Victoria. The new Centre will further turbocharge our joint training, research and real-world emergency simulations – confirming our global reputation as a provider of outstanding health professionals”.