

# 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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## MORE VICTORIANS STEPPING IN TO SAVE LIVES

More bystanders than ever before are stepping in to save the lives of Victorians experiencing cardiac arrest – putting into action CPR skills or using a nearby Automatic External Defibrillator (AED).

Minister for Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas revealed new data from the *Victorian Ambulance Cardiac Arrest Registry (VACAR) Annual Report 2022/23* including a record 139 cases where a member of the public has used a defibrillator to assist someone in cardiac arrest.

Of these instances, 53 per cent survived – this compares to just 26 per cent of people who survived without immediate bystander intervention prior to Ambulance Victoria paramedics arriving on the scene.

The report also highlights the value of learning CPR, with 12 per cent of Victorians surviving when they received immediate CPR from a bystander, compared to five per cent who survived without.

It comes as Victoria experiences an increase in out-of-hospital cardiac arrests, with paramedics responding to a total of 7,830 callouts from July 2022 to June 2023 – a 6.4 per cent increase on the previous year.

Despite this, Victoria continues to have highest cardiac arrest survival rates in Australia.

Responding to the increase, Ambulance Victoria last year released its *2023-2028 Cardiac Arrest Improvement Strategy* – outlining their plan to roll out community-based education and participation programs for both adults and children, including learning CPR and how to use an AED.

Ambulance Victoria's GoodSAM app is also making a difference – integrated with Triple Zero, it quickly connects people suffering cardiac arrest with bystander help until an ambulance arrives.

The latest health performance data showed overall demand on Victoria's paramedics remains at an all-time high, with the October-December quarter Code 1 call outs rising by 3.4 per cent to a total of 99,833 – making it the second busiest quarter in the history of Ambulance Victoria.

Since 2014, the Allan Labor Government has invested more than \$2 billion into Victoria's ambulance services - doubling the on-road workforce by 50 per cent with an additional 2,200 paramedics, delivering more MICA paramedics, and building or upgrading 51 ambulance stations.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas

*"Minutes matter in cardiac arrests and when a patient receives CPR and defibrillation before paramedics arrive, their chance of survival increases by more than 70 per cent."*

*"Victoria has the best cardiac arrest survival rate in Australia and is among the highest rates in the world – we are also home to 7,000 registered AEDs -more than other any state or territory nationwide."*