

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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SURGERY WAITLIST HITS FOUR YEAR LOW

The number of Victorians waiting for planned surgery has dropped to its lowest level since the pandemic began – thanks to our dedicated healthcare workers, and reforms to how we deliver surgery.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today announced the quarter three performance data shows continued signs of recovery, including improved emergency department and planned surgery wait times and ambulance response times.

Almost 51,000 Victorians received their planned surgery between January and March 2024 with the waitlist now at 62,228 – the lowest it's been since 2019/20 quarter four (April-June) and almost 30 per cent lower than when the *COVID Catch Up Plan* was launched in April 2022.

99.99 per cent of Category 1 patients received their surgery in the recommended timeframes – and almost 80 per cent of patients across all three categories were treated on time.

More than 153,000 planned surgeries have been delivered so far in 2023/24 – 10 per cent more than the same time last year.

Health services also delivered 45 per cent more planned surgeries in the financial year to date, than the same time in 2022, prior to the plan commencing.

To deliver more surgery we've established Patient Support Units at 23 health services across Victoria to help patients prepare for surgery, opened two new public surgical centres and delivered 10 new Rapid Access Hubs - to streamline services and free up theatres and ward capacity in our busy hospitals.

Despite record demand with more than 493,000 presentations, emergency departments treated patients five minutes faster than pre-pandemic.

Victoria's hardworking paramedics have continued to deliver improvements, reaching the sickest patients 31 seconds faster compared to the same time last year, with the median response time now at 11.8 minutes.

With a total of 96,484 Code 1 call outs, this represents a 4.4 per cent increase compared to the same quarter last year.

Despite this ongoing demand, Code 1 performance has improved with 67.7 per cent of all Code 1 cases responded within 15 minutes, compared to 65.2 per cent the year before.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas

"Our pandemic recovery continues to move in the right direction, and this is testament to our hardworking healthcare workers and their commitment to ensure all Victorians get the care they need, despite ongoing demand."

"Our initiatives are delivering better care, upskilling our workers and ensuring Victorians have more options to access care before it becomes an emergency."