

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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VICTORIANS ENCOURAGED TO BECOME LIFE-MAKERS

For a long time, the possibility of starting a family through IVF has been out of reach for many Victorians – whether it be due to their health, location or financial circumstances.

That's why the Allan Labor Government has launched a new campaign aimed at increasing the number of egg and sperm donors as part of Victoria's more than \$120 million nation-leading Public Fertility Care program.

While blood and organ donors help save lives, egg and sperm donors are helping make lives – with this selfless choice giving Victorians desperate to become parents, the chance to create or expand their family.

Featuring state-of-the-art laboratory facilities and staffed with highly qualified fertility experts, the egg and sperm bank at the Royal Women's Hospital is encouraging altruistic donations from Victorians that want to give someone the chance to start or grow their family.

To date more than 2,800 Victorians have commenced their fertility treatment journey through the public program, with more than 140 women falling pregnant.

It comes as the Labor Government made an additional investment of \$2 million in the *Victorian Budget 2024/25* to continue vital donor services through the Public Fertility Care egg and sperm bank – an Australian-first in a public health system.

On top of this, the Budget is also investing \$5.7 million to continue antenatal care through the Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies initiative in regional Victoria – providing support for mums who are having to juggle difficult issues like poor mental health, language barriers or socioeconomic factors.

While an additional \$18.3 million investment is also helping Victoria to continue leading the way in transforming the delivery of women's health promotion.

This funding will support 12 non-government women's health promotion organisations to raise awareness and improve the delivery of preventative health promotion and education to Victorian women.

This funding builds on the more than \$153 million previous investment for 20 new comprehensive women's health clinics, nine new women's sexual and reproductive health hubs, and scholarships to expand the women's health workforce.

Eligible Victorians seeking to access public fertility care – including the use of donated eggs or sperm – will need to be referred by their GP or specialist. People interested in helping Victorians start their family can visit thewomens.org.au/egg-and-sperm-donate.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"Being an egg or sperm donor is one of the most selfless things anyone can do to help the lives of others – becoming a life maker is going to give more Victorians the chance to have a child and grow a family."

"Our Australian-first Public Fertility Care is making it fairer, easier and more accessible for hopeful parents to start a family of their own."

Media contact: Isobel Loschiavo 0431 963 479 | isobel.loschiavo@minstaff.vic.gov.au