

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services



Sunday, 1 June 2025

IMPROVING WAIT TIMES AND EMERGENCY CARE FOR VICTORIANS

The Allan Labor Government is relieving pressure on Victoria's busy emergency departments – to help patients get the care they need, sooner.

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas visited the Austin Hospital where a \$58.4 million investment in the *Victorian Budget 2025/26* will support the faster handover of patients arriving via ambulance right across the state.

This investment will increase the capacity of short stay units across Victoria, so that health services can treat more patients in the emergency department without admitting them to a ward – improving the flow of patients in the hospital, keeping beds for the sickest patients and helping more patients return home sooner.

We're also putting nurse practitioners in more emergency departments, working with senior clinicians they will be able to provide treatment for patients who don't require a short stay or an inpatient bed – this will mean more patients get seen sooner.

This package will also deliver more nurses and inpatient beds to emergency departments – to speed up admissions during peak periods of demand and ensure timely transfers to wards. Work is underway to decide where these additional nurses and beds will go.

This investment builds on the new Standards for Safe and Timely Ambulance and Emergency Care which is helping deliver faster care, support staff in busy emergency departments, and get paramedics back on the road sooner.

Rolling out at major hospitals across Victoria – it has so far seen the Austin, Frankston, Monash Clayton, Maroondah, and Royal Melbourne hospitals improve handover times between paramedics and emergency staff by more than 10 per cent.

The standards are about ensuring patients can get world-class care faster and closer to home, through measures including re-direction to alternative care settings, enhanced patient transfer procedures, more timely inpatient admissions and early discharges.

They are being rolled out in a phased approach, recognising every hospital has a different capacity and capability.

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

"Victorians deserve the very best care, when and where they need it – that's why we are backing our frontline workforce to drive down wait times and get our paramedics back on the road sooner."

"The introduction of our new handover standards earlier this year is already having a positive impact across our health system with some of our busiest hospitals improving transfer times by more than 10 per cent."

Quote attributable to Member for Ivanhoe Anthony Carbines

"We're supporting healthcare workers right across Victoria including those here at the Austin, who deliver incredible care to our community every day."