

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services



Thursday, 19 February 2026

FAIRER AND SAFER HEALTHCARE FOR MORE VICTORIANS

The Allan Labor Government is building a fairer and safer health system for all Victorians – no matter who you are.

Today, the Parliament passed the *Health Safeguards for People Born with Variations in Sex Characteristics Bill 2025*.

The Minister for Health said the new regulations strengthen protections and rights for Victorians born with variations in sex characteristics.

Every person's body is different. People with variations in sex characteristics are born with sex characteristics that do not fit typical definitions or understandings of male or female bodies.

Some people born with variations in sex characteristics have experienced very serious and lasting consequences from treatment performed on them without their informed consent.

This Bill ends that practice in Victoria.

It means the most vulnerable – typically infants and children – do not receive medical interventions that permanently change their bodies until they are old enough to consent.

Urgent treatments required to save a life or prevent serious harm will continue without delay.

Parents will have access to more information and supports. This will enable better healthcare outcomes and support informed decision making.

People born with variations in sex characteristics and their families also get access to peer and psychosocial support.

Victoria will be first state and second jurisdiction in Australia to enshrine these safeguards into law.

The Bill has been developed through extensive consultation with the community and clinical, legal and human rights experts since 2021.

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"No matter who you are – every Victorian deserves access to a health system that has their best interests at heart."

"For too long, Victorians born with variations in sex characteristics have had harm caused to them by our medical system."

"This bill puts an end to these unnecessary interventions."

Quote attributable to Minister for Equality Vicki Ward

"We introduced this landmark legislation because every Victorian deserves access to safe, appropriate medical care – no matter how you are born."