

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services

Minister for Women



Sunday, 22 March 2026

DELIVERING FASTER EMERGENCY CARE FOR VICTORIANS

Victoria's world-class hospitals are delivering faster, safer emergency care.

It's thanks to the Allan Labor Government's *Timely Emergency Care (TEC)* program that Victorians are seeing shorter wait times and earlier recovery at home.

The program began in late 2024 and includes 22 metro and regional hospitals, and Ambulance Victoria.

Minister Thomas today announced results from the first 18 months, ahead of the program expansion that begins this week.

In the first 18 months:

- More than 65,000 bed days saved across participating hospitals
- 9.6 hours saved per inpatient admission
- More than 2,600 avoidable admissions prevented
- More than 11,200 additional short-stay units patients treated – with care delivered 9 per cent faster.

These results follow a focus on clearer processes, greater bed capacity, patient handover and stronger system-wide collaboration.

From Tuesday, the next phase of the statewide program starts – focusing on reducing delays from ED arrival through to discharge.

It will continue to embed the *Standards for Safe and Timely Ambulance and Emergency Care*, so hospitals are working to the same evidence-based expectations.

It will mean faster offload times so patients are seen sooner, and paramedics can get back on the road.

TEC uses scientific expertise and world-leading methods to deliver faster care and it's clear the program is working.

The AMA's 2026 Public Hospital Report Card shows Victoria now leads the nation in urgent ED patients being seen on time.

Victoria was the only state or territory to improve in more than two of the AMA's key performance indicators.

Most others recorded a decline. But we know there is more work to do.

It's why Labor backed TEC with a \$50.4 million investment in the *Victorian Budget 2025/26*.

A \$146 million investment is also expanding alternative care pathways to ease pressure on paramedics and EDs.

Labor delivers world-class care when Victorians need it. Jess Wilson's Liberals will cut jobs and close hospitals.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"Victorians are getting the care they need sooner with shorter wait times and earlier recovery at home."

"Timely Emergency Care is slashing hours from hospital stays, freeing up beds and easing pressure on our EDs."

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Quote attributable to Member for Ivanhoe Anthony Carbines

“The Austin is doing a stellar job of driving down wait times and making sure the community gets the right care at the right time.”