

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Acting Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for WorkSafe and TAC



Thursday, 9 April 2026

VIRTUAL HOSPITAL MAKING CARE EASIER FOR MORE VICTORIANS

The Allan Labor Government is making it easier and faster for Victorians to get the care they need.

Acting Premier Ben Carroll and Minister Mary-Anne Thomas today announced the Victorian Virtual Hospital pilot will expand.

Led by Austin Health and the Royal Melbourne Hospital, the expansion means more Victorians can receive care and recover at home.

This then frees up beds in hospital for patients who need them most.

Since December, more than 260 patients have been treated safely – saving the equivalent of more than 1,000 hospital bed days to date.

Initially aiming to treat more than 250 patients, it will now support up to 400 patients by the end of June.

Digital technology is used to deliver better access to safe, high-quality specialist care, with services including:

- **Virtual wards** – focused on heart failure and post-cardiac surgery patients
- **Regional support services** – virtual ward rounds and secondary consultations in partnership with regional and rural hospitals
- **Virtual foetal medicine** – delivered by Royal Women’s Hospital to give women in the regions access to timely specialist assessment.

Patients receive daily care including check-ins, 24-hour support and at-home visits when or if needed.

Virtual wards and support services have been treating patients in Wangaratta, Seymour, Albury, Wodonga and Colac – with an expansion to Shepparton and Echuca in coming weeks.

Foetal medicine services are supporting women across Ballarat and Bendigo – with plans to expand.

The Virtual Hospital pilot is also helping to strengthen collaboration between metro and regional clinicians.

It builds on Labor’s strong investment in virtual care, including \$437 million to double the capacity of the Virtual Emergency Department – and make it permanent.

Quotes attributable to Acting Premier Ben Carroll

“The Virtual Hospital pilot is saving Victorians time and money – providing safe, world class care at home.”

“We’re freeing up hospital beds for those who need them most.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

“The Virtual Hospital is already proving a gamechanger for regional Victorians.”

“We’re making sure people get the care they need at home, and closer to home, reducing the need for travel.”

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