

Easier. Safer. More Affordable.

Victorian Budget 2026/27



Sunday, 3 May 2026

LABOR'S SOLUTION TO HELP KIDS WAITING FOR SURGERY

One in three children are currently waiting too long for surgery.

These delays – caused by surging demand – can impact a child's ability to fully participate in school, hang out with friends, complete their exams and start their future.

Victoria leads the nation in delivering the most urgent surgeries, but this challenge affecting kids needs action now.

That's why the *2026/27 Victorian Budget* tackles it head on, investing in:

- 4,000 more planned surgeries for children
- 45,000 additional specialist clinic appointments for children
- More ways to expand access to specialist care and save patients time and money

With bowel cancer on the rise among young people, the Budget also delivers a boost for endoscopy access.

4,000 more surgeries for children

Demand for planned surgery for children and young people has surged in the last few years.

The Budget invests \$50.1 million to deliver 4,000 additional planned surgeries for kids.

This includes general and specialist surgeries like orthopaedics across the state.

The investment will help significantly reduce the number of children and young people on the preparation list waiting too long for care.

Health services will be prioritised for the additional activity based on need – they include Royal Children's Hospital, Western Health, Monash Health, Barwon Health and Bendigo Health.

And to ensure children aren't missing school, we'll focus surge capacity on school holidays.

45,000 more specialist appointments for children

Childhood is a time when timely specialist intervention is critical to development.

But due to surging demand, thousands of children are waiting too long for a first specialist appointment.

This includes specialist appointments to a paediatrician for acute neurological concerns like seizures.

The Budget invests almost \$16 million to deliver 45,000 extra specialist appointments for kids and young people.

This investment will fund medical, allied health, nurse-led and multi-disciplinary clinics.

It means more children access the right care, in the right place, at the right time, by the right provider.

More innovations to expand access and reduce wait times

Waiting months for a specialist care appointment costs families time and money.

The Budget invests \$8.0 million in a new Victorian first pilot – Specialist Advice Now – to reduce wait times.

This service enables GPs and patients to get timely specialist advice without the need for a referral.

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Queensland studies have shown this model allows up to 82 per cent of patient issues to be resolved by GPs with the advice provided.

It's all possible through our expansion of VicKey – a secure digital portal for patients and practitioners alike.

The Budget invests \$33.3 million to expand VicKey and increase the number of health services using the platform.

VicKey digitises a vast amount of patient and hospital information to help hospitals manage waitlists more efficiently.

And it works – at one Victorian health service, VicKey helped reduce the collective time patients are waiting for key specialist appointments by 38 per cent.

Better access to endoscopies

Bowel cancer is on the rise for young Victorians and early screening can be lifesaving.

The Budget invests \$27 million so more Victorians can get endoscopies.

We'll fund new and upgraded endoscopy equipment, so more procedures can be delivered where there's high demand.

This investment will also support the establishment of Endoscopy Access Teams at 26 health services.

Labor's record

Labor funded and built the Royal Children's Hospital and now we're delivering more care to reduce wait times.

Jess Wilson's Liberals have a track record of cutting, closing and privatising hospitals, and taking care away.

Now they have an \$11.5 billion black hole in their Budget, and that means one thing: more cuts and more delays.

Only Labor has new solutions to make life easier, safer and more affordable.

Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"This is personal for me. I know firsthand how scary it can be when you have a sick child in hospital."

"More surgery for children and young people will help kids get back to school – and get back to being kids."

"Above all, we are a government that believes in improving our public health system, so families have somewhere to turn when they need it."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Harriet Shing

"We're making sure children and families right across Victoria can access the surgical and specialist care and treatment they need."

"Labor is delivering more surgeries than ever before, but under the Liberals, you're on your own."