Media Release
The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier

Wednesday, 1 April, 2015

TRAVIS REVIEW INTERIM REPORT RELEASED

The Premier and Minister for Health today joined surgeon and former AMA Victoria President Dr Doug Travis, as he released the Interim Report into his review of Victoria’s public hospitals.

Despite promising 800 new hospital beds, the former Liberal Government failed to deliver, and spent four years refusing to disclose the location of any new beds or admit they had fallen well short of their commitment.

Labor committed to this independent review while in Opposition to find the missing beds and, for the first time, give Victorians a clear picture of what is going on in their health system.

This is the most comprehensive review ever undertaken into the capacity of Victoria’s hospitals.

All 86 public health services were surveyed for the Travis Review, and 34 metropolitan, regional and rural hospitals across Victoria were visited.

In conducting the Review, Dr Travis was asked to:

- Identify the number of beds and theatres at each health service
- Identify how many beds are currently operational and how many are ‘closed’
- Recommend strategies to improve the capacity of our hospitals in order to reduce the elective surgery waiting list and free up overcrowded emergency departments.

After four years of neglect under the former Victorian Liberal Government, which slashed $1 billion from the health budget, and with the Abbott Government set to cut around $13 billion from Victoria’s public hospitals over the next ten years, today’s Interim Report confirms the immense challenge the Andrews Labor Government faces to fix Victoria’s health system.

The Travis Review Interim Report has found that, on average:

- There are 13,981 inpatient beds and other points of care (acute and sub-acute beds, chairs and cots, not including mental health beds), of which 12,545 are generally available for use (i.e. 1,436 beds are not being used)
- There are 1,284 patient treatment spaces in public hospital emergency departments, urgent care and primary care services, of which 1,190 are generally available for use (i.e. 94 ED spaces are not being used)
- There are 290 operating theatres of which 237 are generally available for use (i.e. 53 operating theatres are not being used).

The Interim Report also found that:

- The majority of hospital beds not in use are at major metropolitan health services (1,001 beds out of 1,436 beds)
- Victoria’s health services provide home-based care to patients who would otherwise occupy 900 beds.

In his Interim Report, Dr Travis provides 15 recommendations, including the development and regular updating of a statewide plan. This plan would give policy makers a better understanding of which health services could benefit from greater support.

The Labor Government has already committed $200 million to a Beds Rescue Fund which will be used to open beds and other points of care that are currently closed.

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Dr Travis will present his final report to the Minister for Health by the end of June 2015, which, based on the findings of his census, will propose models of care that could be introduced to improve capacity in Victoria’s public hospitals and innovative treatment delivery opportunities to enable better patient outcomes.

The Interim Report can be found at www.health.vic.gov.au/Travis.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

“We committed to undertake this review to find the beds the former Liberal Government promised but never delivered.”

“This Interim Report confirms the immense size of the challenge we now face to fix our health system, after four years of neglect by the former Liberal Government.”

“As we promised in the election, we will invest $200 million to a Beds Rescue Fund to open beds and theatres across Victoria so that our loved ones can get the care they need.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health, Jill Hennessy

“Our health system is under enormous pressure. The former Victorian Liberal Government cut $1 billion from our health system and the Abbott Government is set to slash $13 billion from our public hospitals over the next ten years.”

“This is the most comprehensive review ever undertaken into the capacity of Victoria’s hospitals. It confirms that there are beds available in hospitals that aren’t being used.”

“We’re going to use this data to ensure we fund the right type of beds in the right health services so Victorians get the care they need, where and when they need it.”