

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier

Friday, 6 April, 2018



Getting Things Done.
Making Things Fair.

BIG BOOST FOR REGIONAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

More regional Victorians will be able to get the health care they need closer to home, thanks to a big Budget boost for the Andrews Labor Government's flagship *Regional Health Infrastructure Fund* (RHIF).

The \$50 million boost, delivered as part of the *Victorian Budget 2018/19*, was announced today, as Premier Daniel Andrews and Minister for Health Jill Hennessy joined Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan and Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards at Bendigo Health's Golden Oaks Nursing Home.

The now \$250 million fund – the largest of its kind in Victorian history – will go to rebuilding rural and regional hospitals to ensure all Victorians can access the quality care and facilities they need, no matter where they live. Already the RHIF has funded 172 projects across regional Victoria, creating over 430 construction jobs.

While in Bendigo, Premier Daniel Andrews also announced that the Golden Oaks Nursing Home would receive nearly \$5 million through the second round of the Labor Government's RHIF program, ensuring residents get the modern, high quality facilities they deserve.

This funding boost will be used to build a new 15-bed wing, enabling the majority of residents to move from dual occupancy to single rooms, and securing the long-term future of this aged care facility.

This will mean residents can look forward to more private and comfortable bedrooms, as well as safer and more modern amenities. A dining room and kitchen upgrade will also allow for meals to be cooked fresh onsite.

Meanwhile, construction is now underway on a \$3.5 million project to build a link between the Golden Oaks Nursing Home and the 45-bed Carshalton House. This project – funded in conjunction with Bendigo Health and a generous bequest – will further improve the quality of life for residents.

Last year's Budget delivered \$1.67 billion to help hospitals meet demand and provide the care Victorian patients deserve, as well as \$428.5 million in new hospital upgrades. In 2017/18, Bendigo Health received \$290.5 million in funding from the Labor Government – a whopping \$56.7 million increase on the Liberals' last Budget.

This is in stark contrast to Malcolm Turnbull who has declared his intention to short-change Victoria's hospitals by \$2.1 billion – and put patients at risk – with his proposed and deeply flawed National Health Reform Agreement.

Hitting local patients hard, Malcolm Turnbull's proposed agreement would mean a \$56.8 million shortfall for Bendigo Health – the equivalent of 191 fewer doctors, 455 fewer nurses or 9,155 fewer surgeries.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

"I grew up in regional Victoria, and I know how much local hospitals matter to local communities. This funding increase will see more patients get the care they need sooner and closer to home."

"With even more money, the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund will make sure regional patients get the best care, from the best professionals, in the best facilities."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Jill Hennessy

"Support for our regional health services is about more than just words - it's about delivering real investment to make sure patients get the care they need, no matter their postcode."

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Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan

“Our investment will make a real difference to Golden Oaks residents, giving them a more comfortable, more modern home.”

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

“We know there’s a clear preference for single rooms in our aged care facilities. These modern single rooms will help make sure residents get the comfort and care they deserve.”