

Media Release

The Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC
Minister for Health
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A HEALTHY WAY TO KEEP PASSENGERS MOVING

The Andrews Labor Government is taking action to better protect passengers who become sick or injured on Victoria's trains.

Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos and Minister for Public Transport Melissa Horne today joined Victoria's Chief Paramedic Officer Alan Eade at Richmond Train Station to announce a landmark new policy for managing and treating sick or injured passengers.

In the past, sick or injured passengers were left on board trains until first aid or paramedics arrived – causing discomfort for patients and potential long delays for other passengers.

Already this year, incidents involving unwell passengers have caused delays to almost 5,000 services on the metropolitan train network, with bottlenecks regularly occurring around City Loop stations and at Richmond, Camberwell and Box Hill stations.

That's why the Labor Government asked the Chief Paramedic and Safer Care Victoria to work with the key agencies to review the approach.

Now, public transport staff, Protective Service Officers, Authorised Officers, Victoria Police and the public will be encouraged to help unwell passengers off trains as normal practice.

The review found it is safer to treat sick passengers on the platform or station where there is more space and privacy, better access to water, toilets and medical equipment such as defibrillators, and a higher likelihood first-aid trained staff and bystanders will be on hand to help.

Meanwhile for commuters, the policy change reduces disruptions and delays across the train network.

Defibrillators are already in place at 12 metropolitan train stations, while Metro is rolling out the life-saving devices at 32 more. V/Line has recently installed defibrillators at 29 staffed stations in response to 25 cardiac-related incidents involving passengers or staff in 2017.

The only exception to the new policy are when passengers may have a spinal injury and should not be moved, are difficult to move or when their behaviour poses a danger to others.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos

"We're taking action to keep patients and other passengers safe – and making sure they get the treatment and care they need when they get sick."

"The safety of sick or injured passengers is our top priority – and moving unwell passengers onto the platform where treatment is more readily available makes sense."

Quote attributable to Minister for Public Transport Melissa Horne

"A sick or injured passenger can have a massive ripple effect on the public transport system, with services grinding to a halt while help is on its way."

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