

Media Release

The Hon Jenny Mikakos MLC
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

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DIGITAL TOOLS BRING CANCER TRIALS TO ALL VICTORIANS

More people from rural and regional Victoria with cancer will access clinical trials closer to home using the teletrial model with digital technology, thanks to a \$1.5 million Andrews Labor Government funding boost.

Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos today announced the launch of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre's (VCCC) Teletrials Program in Bendigo and Albury Wodonga, which will extend to other parts of regional Victoria.

Clinical trials are the gateway to accessing cutting-edge cancer therapies but fewer than five per cent of Victorians outside Melbourne participate in them due to the need for travel and time away from home.

The VCCC Teletrials Program has built partnerships between metropolitan and regional centres to help more Victorians access trials run by leading cancer hospitals such as the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre.

Teletrials are part of the Labor Government's \$20 million funding boost to increase the number of cancer trials being run in Victoria.

On top of the Teletrials Program, \$3.7 million has been granted for four new projects to help more than 6,000 patients access world-leading trials through the VCCC Investigator-Initiated Trial Capacity Building Program.

The four projects focus on improving radiotherapy before surgery, pain management, combining treatments to enhance success of blood stem cell transplantation and better anaesthetics during surgery.

Recent data shows that in 2017, 34,557 Victorians were diagnosed with cancer and 10,955 died from the disease – with 95 new diagnoses each day.

Victoria has some of the best cancer survival rates in the world – it's a testament to our proud track record of investing in world-class cancer prevention, treatment and research. The five-year survival rate for Victorians diagnosed with cancer has increased from 46 per cent in 1982 to 68 per cent in 2016.

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Jenny Mikakos

"Teletrials are giving cancer patients in rural and regional Victoria better access to clinical trials using digital health technology. This is about making sure all Victorians can access clinical trials – no matter where they live."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan

"Teletrials can offer rural and regional cancer patients access to metropolitan clinical trials without the need to take extra time off work, travel long distances and pay for accommodation."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

"It's fantastic that cancer patients in regional areas will be able to access the benefits of clinical trials without having to travel away from family at a time when they're not in peak health."

Quote attributable to VCCC Executive Director Professor Grant McArthur

"Increasing access to cancer clinical trials for regional Victorians is a strategic priority for the VCCC and its members."

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