

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee Inquiry into 2020-2021 Financial and Performance Outcomes

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A year of two stories

Victoria has faced the full force of the COVID-19 pandemic over the past 12 months – with our healthcare system on the frontline of this challenge.

We rapidly expanded in critical areas, reduced services in others to provide extra capacity, changed our ways of working, and adapted to new technology.

Drawing on the expertise, skills and capacity of our brilliant health workforce our health system has continued to perform well – caring for those who need it most.

The challenge is not over – and the next few months are predicted to be the toughest yet – but our health services are equipped, trained, and ready to respond.

Our focus remains on delivering the healthcare Victorians need and deserve, whoever and wherever they are.



Helping Victorians to stay healthy

2020-21 Victorian budget highlights



Investment of more than \$2 billion to build, expand and modernise our hospital and health services

- \$384.2 million to redevelop Warrnambool Hospital
- \$562 million will go towards the expansion of Frankston Hospital
- \$75 million for planning and early works for the new Melton Hospital
- \$117 million to continue planning and land purchase for new Community Hospitals
- \$120 million Regional Health Infrastructure Fund to support our rural and regional health services
- \$200 million for the new Metropolitan Health Infrastructure Fund



\$2.9 billion to respond to COVID-19



\$571 million to begin implementation of Mental Health Royal Commission interim recommendations



\$300 million for elective surgery deferred during the pandemic



\$121 million for *Better at Home* to provide hospital care at home

High performance against the odds ...

Despite COVID-19, our health system has continued to meet and exceed most performance indicators

Nearly 1.9 million hospital separations, an increase on 2019-20.

More than 163,000 Victorians admitted for elective surgery, only 7,500 fewer than 2019-20.

All urgent elective surgery patients admitted within 30 days.

More major trauma patients receiving care in the right place, 6.5% above target.

Faster treatment for those with a suspected stroke, with 98.5% at a stroke unit in <60 mins, 9.4% above target.

Rates of serious in-hospital infections (CLABSI and SAB) both lower than 2019-20.

Unplanned hospital readmissions with serious heart diseases 10-25% lower than target, and lower than 2019-20.

All high-priority clients assessed for aged care on time, 10% better than target and 4.2% better than 2019-20.

Community-based drug treatment courses started were 36% more than target, and 10% more than 2019-20.



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... but with pandemic-related pressures impacting performance

Nearly 520,000 emergency road transports by AV, 7.4% more than target. But:

Proportion of emergency (code 1) calls responded to within 15 minutes was 77.2%, 9.2% below target and Ambulance-to-ED patient transfers within 40 minutes was 74%, 17.8% below target.

While all Cat 1 ED patients were treated immediately, only 62% of all ED patients stayed < 4hrs, 17.3% lower than target.

And 54.4% ED patients with mental health were admitted within 8 hours, 32% lower than target.

Only 61.6% semi-urgent (Cat 2) elective surgery patients were admitted on time, 25.8% lower than target.

Provision of Home and Community Care for younger people, 877,000 hours, was 12.3% lower than target.

272,446 persons treated by dental services, 18% lower than target and 50,000 fewer than 2019-20.



Responding to COVID-19 in the community

Our capacity to rapidly test, trace, isolate and quarantine cases improved significantly throughout 2020-21

New contact tracing Customer Relationship Management system means 99% COVID+ people now contacted within 24hrs.

External contact centres used to respond rapidly to escalating volumes of cases.

9 local public health units established to manage local outbreaks through:

- End-to-end contact tracing and outbreak management, with 18,474 cases identified and managed during 2020-21.
- Fixed site and rapid response testing, with over 6.4 million tests conducted.
- COVID-19 vaccination community engagement programs, helping Victoria achieve 83% (16+) double dose rate as at 5 Nov 2021.



Victoria's state-run COVID-19 vaccination program delivered above expectation in 2020-21

Network of 78 clinics opened statewide, including high-volume vaccination hubs.

48.6% of vaccines administered at state vaccination centres by 30 June 2021.

Preparing for COVID-19 within our health system

Innovative streaming model saw COVID-19 patients treated at select health services, reducing transmission, improving care, and protecting non-COVID care.

Prior to the pandemic there were 515 ICU beds in the system. As of September 2021 there were 1,493 ICU capable bed spaces prepared across public and private hospitals.

931 new ventilators distributed to 26 health services, bringing total to 1,700 ventilators across the public health system.

With Adult Retrieval Victoria, established CHRIS, real time ICU bed monitoring system.

Partnership with private hospitals to boost bed capacity and workforce.

117,000 frontline workers fit-tested for N95 masks, with over 204 machines bought and 122 staff trained as fit-testers.

Maintaining supply of a skilled health workforce to deliver care has been a critical to the COVID-19 response

An extra 115,000 shifts delivered by clinical surge workforce in hospitals, testing, vaccinations, and aged care.

Other professional groups undertook supervised testing and vaccination duties, reducing dependency on ward-ready staff.

23,700 training places for ICU, general nursing and aged care workforce to upskill on critical care and infection controls.



First steps towards mental health system reform

Work began to address urgent issues identified by Royal Commission and lay the foundation for future mental health system reform

Building 120 new acute mental health beds in Geelong, Epping, Sunshine, and Melbourne.

6 new Hospital Outreach Post-suicidal Engagement (HOPE) sites established in Shepparton, Epping, Heidelberg, Royal Melbourne Hospital, Mildura, and Broadmeadows.

Hospital in the Home program started with 9 beds delivered by Orygen and Barwon Health, offering home based acute treatment, care and support.

Planning for the Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing centre hosted by VACCHO has commenced.

At the same time, we have responded to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on Victorians mental health

Community mental health clinics extended operating hours so more face-to-face COVID-19 safe services available for consumers finding it difficult to engage with telehealth services.

Additional funding for helplines to cope with surge demand following impact of COVID-19.

COVID safe operation of non-government organisations for mental health and AOD services across the state.



Working together to provide better, safer care

Safer Care Victoria supporting the health system and COVID-19 response

- Developed 51 COVID-19 clinical guidelines.
- Developed 26 best-care guidelines on non-urgent elective surgery.
- Established the healthcare worker wellbeing centre.
- Trained 300 people to improve health service capability in reviewing and learning from adverse patient safety events.

Victorian Agency for Health Information (VAHI)

Continued to enhance quality and safety reporting with the release of the first hospital-acquired complications report to guide improvements and interventions to prevent extended recovery time, pain and suffering.

Health system improvement

Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Amendment Act 2020 passed in November 2020, with reform also supporting better care in public sector residential aged care facilities.

Victorian coroner's data report from 2020 shows a reduction in prescription medicine overdose deaths for a second year in a row, which coincides with the implementation of SafeScript.

Continued strengthening of Health Service Partnerships for shared approaches to care delivery



Innovations for the future of our health system

The challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic required innovative thinking and new ways of delivering care

Rapid expansion of telehealth with 86,000 telehealth video calls in September 2021, compared to about 800 in Sept 2019.

A centralised statewide supply chain for critical PPE and other equipment established, with more than 570 million items supplied to health services in 2020-21.

Expanded pathology system capacity to help maintain fast turnaround times, with at least 80 per cent of COVID-19 test results released within 24 hours.

Implementation of electronic prescribing fast tracked for use by prescribers and pharmacists in primary care.

Established integrated in-home and hospital care pathways for COVID patients, suitable for future application to chronic conditions

