

# Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier

Victorian  
Labor

**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Sunday, 28 October 2018

## **MORE SPECIALIST CARE CLOSER TO HOME FOR REGIONAL VICTORIANS**

Patients in regional and rural communities will benefit from an extra 500,000 dedicated appointments with medical specialists, with a re-elected Andrews Labor Government helping to make sure every Victorian can get the care they need, closer to home.

The Andrews Labor Government has invested heavily in health care for regional patients, building and improving small rural health services and major hospitals across our state, investing in our doctors, nurses and paramedics, and delivering the single biggest fund ever dedicated to regional health infrastructure in Victoria's history.

But there's still more to do. That's why a re-elected Labor Government will deliver 500,000 more specialist appointments in regional communities over the next four years.

Right now, many regional patients are required to travel to Melbourne for appointments and treatment, or face big out-of-pocket costs for a local private appointment.

With private specialist appointments costing between \$175 and \$565, this investment has the potential to save Victorian patients thousands of dollars. It will mean regional patients won't be spending hours away from loved ones to access specialist care.

Our landmark boost to rural and regional specialist medical services will mean 75,000 extra appointments for heart conditions, 30,000 appointments for those struggling with arthritis, 50,000 appointments for Victorians with chronic pain and 40,000 extra appointments for patients suffering from cancer.

We will also establish an easy-to-access registry for GPs, with up-to-date information about individual hospital wait lists, so that country patients can be seen faster – and closer to home.

The Liberals cut \$1 billion from health, driving up wait times and giving up on rural and regional patients.

In contrast, Labor has invested record funding to make sure country patients get the care they deserve, building world-class hospitals in Bendigo, Ballarat and Shepparton, with a re-elected Labor Government to upgrade hospitals in the Latrobe Valley and Wonthaggi.

Only Labor will make sure patients get world-class care no matter where they live.

### **Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews**

*"So many of my dad's final days were spent away from home just to get the care he needed. He's not alone in that, with thousands of regional patients forced to face the same heartache."*

*"That needs to change – and under Labor it will. Patients shouldn't have to spend hundreds of dollars on private appointments or hours in the car away from loved ones."*

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Health Jill Hennessy**

*"This is not just 500,000 appointments – it's 500,000 opportunities for assessment and treatment for patients and their families."*

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