

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC**

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Regional Development

Deputy Leader of the Government  
in the Legislative Council

Victorian  
Labor

**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Thursday, 1 November 2018

## GIVING PATIENTS IN CENTRAL VICTORIA THE BEST CARE

A re-elected Andrews Labor Government will deliver better care for people across Central Victoria, with ambulance station upgrades, new vehicles, more specialist appointments and more paramedics.

Only Labor stands with our doctors, nurses and patients. We've already repaired the Liberals' chronic cuts to health care, investing \$3.2 billion building world-class hospitals and delivering our health care workers modern equipment, but there's more to do.

That's why Labor will put more world-leading specialists into the regions, paving the way for more specialist appointments in regional and rural Victoria – including Central Victoria – over the next four years.

Right now, many regional patients are required to travel to Melbourne for treatment and appointments, 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.

Labor 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 Andrews Labor Government is already completely rebuilding St Arnaud Ambulance Station, so paramedics have the modern facilities they deserve, and has delivered Wedderburn its first ever 24-hour ambulance service.

Labor will convert Avoca, Inglewood, Charlton and St Arnaud stations into dual crew stations – ensuring there's always another paramedic on hand to help out and save lives as part of a \$109 million investment in ambulance services across regional Victoria.

All Liberal governments cut and close. The former Liberal Government slashed funding to health and went to war with our paramedics. This caused response times for ambulances arriving at Code 1 emergencies within 15 minutes to deteriorate to a record low of 73 per cent – the worst on the Australian mainland.

Labor has ended the Liberals' ambulance crisis and delivered the biggest ever investment in our ambulance service in Victoria's history, funding an additional 450 new paramedics and building new and upgraded ambulance stations across the state.

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaala Pulford**

*"Whether it's boosting specialist appointments or backing our paramedics with upgraded stations and new equipment, only Labor will deliver the health services regional communities need."*

### **Quote attributable to Labor Candidate for Ripon Sarah De Santis**

*"With these additional resources across St Arnaud, Charlton and Inglewood, we're backing our hardworking and dedicated paramedics, to do what they do best – saving lives."*

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