Hon Jenny Mikakos MP

Minister for Health  
Minister for Ambulance Services

Monday, 27 May 2019

# DELIVERING WORLD-CLASS HEALTH CARE FOR ALL VICTORIANS

Victorians will have brighter smiles, better access to specialist appointments and world-class care in an emergency thanks to major investments in dental and health care across the state in the *Victorian Budget 2019/20*.

Our kids deserve a healthy smile, but tooth decay remains one of the most common health problems. The Budget invests $321.9 million to deliver the Labor Government’s promised rollout of free dental care to all Victorian government school students, with the first school dental vans to hit the road later this year.

Oral disease is one of the most common and expensive diseases to treat, but it is also the most preventable. The ‘Smile Squad’ vans will give kids free dental care including check-ups, radiographs, teeth cleaning, application of fluoride and dental sealants, fillings, root canals and impressions for mouthguards.

It will save families around $400 a year per child in dental costs, as well as the inconvenience of taking time off work for appointments.

While we take action on prevention, we’re also making sure ambulances are arriving at critical emergencies faster than ever before. We’ve already repaired the ambulance crisis that put lives at risk – and now we’re going further. The Budget includes $299.6 million for more paramedics, more cutting-edge vehicles and more ambulance stations.

As a Government we believe that regional Victorians should never be deprived of world-class health care just because of where they live, but right now, many regional patients have to travel to Melbourne for specialist appointments and treatment, or face big out-of-pocket costs for a local private appointment.

That’s why the Budget includes $136.2 million to deliver 500,000 specialist appointments in rural and regional Victoria. With private specialist appointments costing between $175 and $565, this investment has the potential to save Victorian patients thousands of dollars, as well as reduce the time away from family and loved ones.

Other Budget investments that deliver on the Labor Government’s commitments include:

* $117.8 million to recruit and train more nurses, midwives and frontline health workers, and make further improvements to ratios that will see 1,100 extra nurses and midwives in Victorian public hospitals
* $213.6 million to help new parents with new parenting centres, and more maternal and child health nurses
* $116.5 million for cutting-edge medical research projects, including for new cancer therapies.

The Budget builds on the record investment we’ve made in our hospitals and ambulance service to make sure every Victorian, no matter where they live, has access to the quality care they deserve.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health, Minister for Ambulance Services Jenny Mikakos

*“We’re giving our dedicated nurses, doctors and paramedics what they need to deliver health care that all Victorians can count on – no matter where they live.”*

*“Whether it’s free dental care for students, more specialist appointments in regional Victoria or another big boost for our paramedics, we’re putting patients first so that they always get the best care when they need it.”*