



Directions for your health system

Metropolitan Health Strategy



Continuing strength

The strategy is an important step in building a better health system. It aims to secure the future by building on a wide range of recent achievements, which include:

- Expenditure of more than \$5 billion on health services in 2002–2003.
- Employment of 4,000 more nurses.
- Treatment of an extra 35,000 patients to a total of 1,183,700 patients in 2002–2003.
- Expansion of community rehabilitation centres to enable five days per week delivery of services.
- An additional 35,000 hours service delivered by community health services in the last two years in metropolitan Melbourne.
- Opening of a new community rehabilitation centre in Northcote and new falls and mobility clinics at Caulfield General Medical Centre, Kingston Centre, Peninsula Health and Sunshine Hospital.
- Construction of the new Royal Women's Hospital on the same site as the Royal Melbourne Hospital.
- Two new hospitals on one site—Austin Hospital and Mercy Hospital for Women.

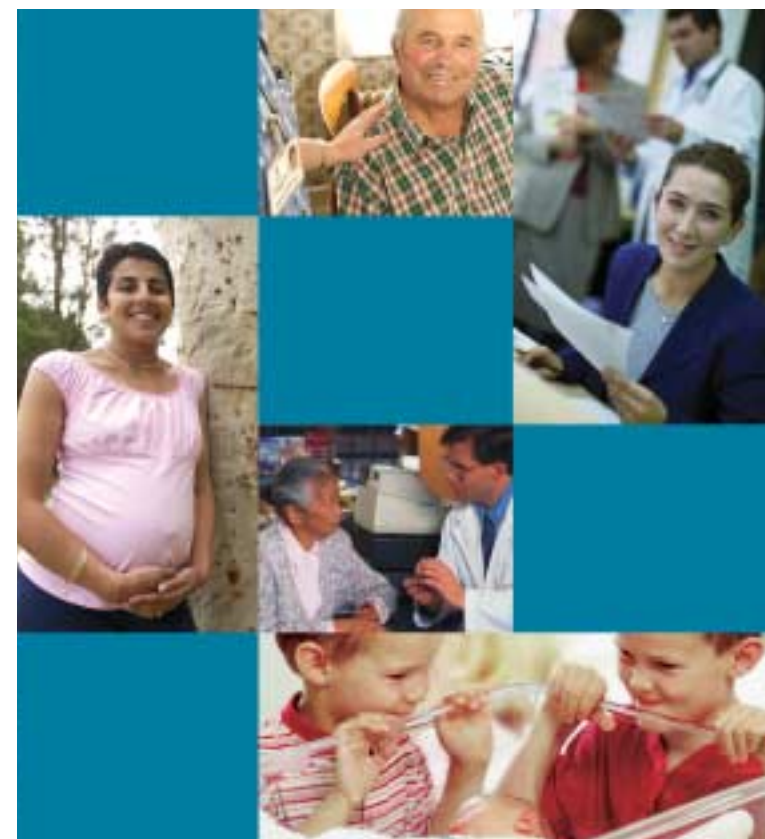
To find out more about the Metropolitan Health Strategy visit the strategy website at

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Metropolitan Health Strategy

The Metropolitan Health Strategy recognises and responds to the changing trends in health services delivery and the key challenges facing the public health system.

By building on the many strengths of the past, the strategy secures a future in which our health services will continue to respond to the advances in health care and deliver the best possible care.

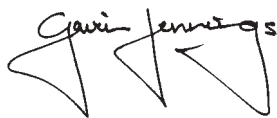
The aim is to ensure that quality health services are available to everyone—where and how they are needed.

The strategy is a responsive and responsible approach to the complex issues impacting on our health system. It complements a number of existing initiatives including the Hospital Demand Management Strategy and community health directions.

We are confident that this framework will ensure that Victorians continue to receive world-class health care.



Hon Bronwyn Pike MP
Minister for Health



Gavin Jennings MLC
Minister for Aged Care

Why the strategy is needed

The public health system continues to face some significant challenges. Some of these are:

Growing demands on the system

Melbourne's overall population growth, the increase in the percentage of older people, the availability of more treatment options and higher community expectations of health care services are combining to put more long term pressure on the system.

New technology and changing practices

The delivery of services is impacted by the emergence of new technology and better ways of providing health care, particularly for chronically ill patients and for people who, in the past, may not have been able to be treated at all. Many services are now being delivered without the need for a person to be admitted into hospital.

The key challenge is to ensure that a strong and practical framework is established for hospitals as they continue to specialise, while specialist services not requiring hospital admission are provided in local areas.

Making the most of services

Expanding treatment options inevitably mean increased costs to our health system. To ensure that the system continues to provide high quality services to people who need them, it is important that the best possible value is derived from the system.

The strategy is meeting the challenge

The strategy establishes a practical framework for the delivery of enhanced health care services across Melbourne. This framework details four key ways in which the public health system can deliver better services:

1. Increasing the capacity of the system to meet the growing demand particularly by planning additional hospital capacity in outer suburban areas.
2. Improving the design and function of facilities and encouraging flexibility in service provision at hospitals.
3. Providing quality alternatives to hospital admission.
4. Developing new ways of providing care especially in the critical areas of paediatric, mental health and cancer services and services for older people.

Snapshot of strategy initiatives

- Upgraded services and facilities at the Alfred, Northern, Maroondah, Dandenong and Werribee Mercy Hospitals and Monash Medical Centre (Clayton and Moorabbin).
- Completion of the new Casey Hospital in Berwick.
- Initial establishment of three super clinics – ‘one stop shops’ for patients needing specialised treatment services not requiring hospital admission at Lilydale, Melton and Craigieburn.
- New 60 bed Knox Hospital focusing on the provision of specialist aged care and rehabilitation services.
- Building of new community health centres incorporating community dental clinics including Banyule/Heidelberg, Doutta Galla/Niddrie, Inner South/Southport, Plenty Valley, Ashburton.
- Establishment of centres promoting health independence to assist in the maintenance of independence and the provision of home-based support for older people.
- Development of health precincts across Melbourne, each to become a community hub for a range of health and health-related services.
- Upgrading of radiotherapy equipment at Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, the Alfred Hospital and the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital.

