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| Non-compliant cladding in Health Services Buildings |
| Fact sheet – Updated August 2021 |

Commencing in July 2017, and following the establishment of the Victorian Cladding Taskforce, the Department of Health and Human Services (now the Department of Health) commenced a comprehensive building audit across its portfolio to identify all buildings with existing combustible cladding that are non-compliant and therefore an unacceptable fire risk, in accordance with the Building Code of Australia (BCA).

The Department thoroughly audited more than 1,100 health service and related buildings to check for non-compliant cladding. Non-compliant cladding was found on 18 public hospital buildings with two buildings requiring minor canopy works only.

All of the hospital buildings identified for replacement works are safe to occupy, and will continue to provide high-quality health services to Victorians. Independent expert fire engineers have inspected each of the affected public hospital buildings and recommended a program of works.

Following the completion of detailed audits on each of our assets, no audit recommended an evacuation of the building.

In all instances remedial works and activities have been undertaken to reduce risk, for example the installation of a cyclone fence, installation of sprinklers in under croft, increasing perimeter patrols, removing motorcycle parking spaces along the external walls of buildings, and restricting the circumstances where hot works can be carried out to the external façade.

The Department is working with each affected health service to make sure that staff and patients are fully informed about the progress of works and each building’s fire safety features.

Funding of $10 million was provided by the Victorian Government in March 2018 to commence high priority cladding removal works within the department’s portfolio.

## Works completed

Work to remove non-compliant cladding has been completed at the below seven public hospitals:

* The Royal Women’s Hospital
* Werribee Mercy Hospital – Catherine McAuley Centre
* Geelong University Hospital
* Goulburn Valley Health - Shepparton Hospital
* Northern Hospital In-Patient Unit Tower
* The North Wing Expansion at Royal Melbourne Hospital
* Casey Hospital

## Works underway

The Department is working closely with Cladding Safety Victoria and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), as the whole of Government agency responsible for the audit and delivery of the cladding rectification program.

The 2019-20 Victorian Budget invested $160 million over the next four years to continue cladding rectification works on government buildings, including all remaining hospitals as assessed in conjunction with Cladding Safety Victoria’s and their recommendations. This includes works to health services buildings at:

* The Acute Services building at Sunshine Hospital
* Baker and Burnett buildings at the Alfred Health campus
* Monash Medical Centre Block A at Clayton
* The Austin Hospital Tower and Mercy Hospital for Women
* The Royal Dental Hospital
* Front entrance building Frankston Hospital (Block F)
* Warrnambool Hospital
* The Periop building at Royal Melbourne Hospital
* Latrobe Regional Hospital
* Wonthaggi Hospital

In February 2021 certain types of cladding products were prohibited for use in Victoria and will no longer be utilised in construction of new or upgraded hospital buildings.

The Department has sought at all times to be transparent in publishing our list of facilities given they are public hospitals, and the department’s duty of care to public patients.

Are these buildings safe to use?

All of the hospital buildings identified for replacement works are safe to occupy, and will continue to provide high-quality health services to Victorians.

Public hospitals have mandatory fire safety features, including:

* A sprinkler system that is monitored and frequently checked
* A fire alarm system generating an immediate and enhanced response from the fire brigade

Victorian public hospitals, unlike some private residential buildings, are staffed 24 hours a day, undertake evacuation planning and drills, have CCTV and public lighting, and employ security staff to monitor buildings and general safety.

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