

# Statement of Priorities

2024-25 Agreement between the Secretary, Department of Health and  
Swan Hill District Health

**OFFICIAL**



Department  
of Health

**OFFICIAL**

The department proudly acknowledges Victoria's Aboriginal communities and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life and how this enriches us.

We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards the equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.

To receive this document in an accessible format, phone using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or [Commissioning and System Improvement; Accountability on](#) <Accountability@health.vic.gov.au>

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

© State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Health, September 2024.

This publication is copyrighted. Apart from any use permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth), no part may be reproduced by any process, nor may any other exclusive right be exercised without the permission of the Department of Health, 2024.

2206-7159 (online/PDF/Word)

Available at [The Department of Health Statements of Priorities](#)

<<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/funding-performance-accountability/statements-of-priorities>>

# Contents page

**Contents page ..... 3**

**Background ..... 4**

**Ministerial Priorities..... 5**

**Part A: Department of Health Strategic Plan ..... 7**

**Part B: Performance Priorities ..... 10**

**Part C: Activity and Funding ..... 12**

**Part D: Commonwealth Funding Contribution ..... 14**

**Accountability and funding requirements ..... 15**

**Signing Page ..... 16**

# Background

Statement of Priorities are key accountability agreements between the Victorian State Government and Victorian publicly funded health, mental health, and ambulance services. The content and process for preparing and agreeing on the annual Statement of Priorities are consistent with sections 40G, 65ZFA, 65ZFB, and section 26 of the *Health Services Act 1988*.

Statement of Priorities are consistent with the health services' strategic plans and aligned to government policy directions and priorities. For 2024-25, the Statement of Priorities continues to refer to the *Department of Health Strategic Plan 2023-27* (Strategic Plan), which is refreshed on an annual basis. The annual agreements support the delivery of, or substantial progress towards, the key shared objectives of quality and safety, good governance and leadership, access and timeliness, and financial sustainability.

Statement of Priorities consists of four main parts:

- Part A provides the strategic priorities for the health service to contribute to in the year ahead.
- Part B lists the performance priorities and agreed targets.
- Part C lists funding and associated activity.
- Part D forms the service agreement between each health service and the state of Victoria for the purposes of the National Health Reform Agreement.

Performance expectations and mechanisms used by the Department of Health (the department) to monitor and manage performance are described in the *Victorian Health Service Performance Monitoring Framework 2024-25* (The Framework).

High standards of governance, transparency and accountability are essential. In this context, the Victorian Government commits to publishing the Statements of Priorities each year and presenting data on the performance of our health system in the public domain.

# Ministerial Priorities

As noted above, Statements of Priorities are aligned to government policy directions and priorities. In 2024-25, these include the following Ministerial priorities:

For the **overall health system**:

1. A reformed health system, shifting from competition to collaboration between health services, and with strengthened, formalised partnerships between health services and community and primary care services to ensure patients receive the right care closer to home.
2. A growing, skilled, and engaged workforce that is supported to develop professionally. This is achieved through an increased supply of critical roles, world leading employee experience, diverse workforce skills and experience, and a strategic focus on future roles, capabilities, professional development, and improving and promoting workplace gender equality, including meeting Health Service obligations under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.
3. A health system that is grounded in respect and safety, particularly cultural safety, and awareness, achieved through mandatory cultural safety training, anti-racism plans and actions, and employment plans that drive greater representation of First Nations people across all levels of a health service.
4. Improved health equity through a focus on:
  - a. Aboriginal health and wellbeing, achieved through identifying and closing gaps in access to care, and improved discharge planning for Aboriginal patients
  - b. family-centred health models for priority populations
5. A focus on women's health, including improved access to abortion care and public fertility services, and reduced gender health disparities supported through the rollout of comprehensive women's health clinics.
6. A continued focus on innovating and improving the quality and safety of care, including through strengthening clinical governance systems under the Victorian Clinical Governance Framework, and improving access to timely care by implementing strategies that improve whole of system patient flow.
7. A financially sustainable health system reflected in balanced health service budgets.

For the **mental health system**:

8. An improved mental health system, through:
  - a. supporting people to stay well in their communities through prevention and promotion
  - b. growing strong, safe, and supported mental health workforces through the implementation of the mental health workforce strategy
  - c. supporting a system that embeds lived experience at every level
  - d. delivering connected, new, and better community and bed-based services
  - e. supporting better consumer outcomes through performance improvement

- f. elevating consumer rights and supporting cultural change in line with the principles of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022
- g. providing culturally safe services that deliver social and emotional wellbeing models for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

**Supporting services for older Victorians:**

- 9. A reformed health system that responds to the needs of older people to receive the right care in the right place through:
  - a. initiatives that reduce avoidable hospital presentations and length of stay for older people in hospital
  - b. availability of public sector residential aged care.
- 10. A strengthened approach to the delivery of high quality and safe aged care services through:
  - a. continued implementation of national aged care reforms arising from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety
  - b. system stewardship and oversight of public aged care service delivery.

These Ministerial priorities are reflected in 2024-25 Statements of Priorities and the Department of Health Strategic Plan 2023-27 (Strategic Plan).

# Part A: Department of Health Strategic Plan

The Statement of Priorities are aligned with the Strategic Plan<sup>1</sup>.

Swan Hill District Health will contribute to the Strategic Plan 2023-27 by agreeing to the following priorities:

## System Priorities

### Excellence in clinical governance

*We aim for the best patient experience and care outcomes by assuring safe practice, leadership of safety, an engaged and capable workforce, and continuing to improve and innovate care.*

#### Goals

- MA1 Develop strong and effective relationships with consumer and clinical partners to drive service improvements as per the Partnering in Healthcare Framework.
- MA2 Strengthen all clinical governance systems, as per the Victorian Clinical Governance Framework, to ensure safe, high-quality care, with a specific focus on building and maintaining a strong safety culture, identifying, reporting, and learning from adverse events, and early, accurate recognition and management of clinical risk to and deterioration of all patients.
- MA4 Identify and develop clinical service models where face to face consultations can be substituted by virtual care wherever possible (using telehealth, remote monitoring), while ensuring strong clinical governance, safety surveillance and patient choice.

Health service deliverables:

- MA1 Participating in SCV's 100,000 Lives Program – Stay Well Stay Home Collaborative which focusses on reducing hospital acquired complications in cardiovascular disease.
- MA2 Improve paediatric patient outcomes by implementing the “ViCTOR track and trigger” observation chart and escalation system whenever children have observations taken.
- MA4 Adopt the Department of Health “Virtual Care Operational Framework” and formulate governance and procedures to align with those outlined in the framework.

### Operate within budget

*Ensure prudent and responsible use of available resources to achieve optimum outcomes.*

#### Goal

- MB1 Develop and implement a health service Budget Action Plan (BAP) in partnership with the Department to manage cost growth effectively to ensure the efficient operation of the health service.

Health service deliverables:

- MB1 Deliver on the key initiatives as outlined in the Budget Action Plan.

---

<sup>1</sup> Link to [Strategic Plan 2023-27](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/our-strategic-plan-2023-27). <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/our-strategic-plan-2023-27>>

- MB1 Utilise data analytics and performance metrics to identify areas of inefficiency and waste and make evidence-based decisions to improve financial sustainability and operational performance.

### **Improving equitable access to healthcare and wellbeing**

*Ensure that Aboriginal people have access to a health, wellbeing and care system that is holistic, culturally safe, accessible, and empowering.*

*Ensure that communities in rural and regional areas have equitable health outcomes irrespective of locality.*

#### **Goals**

- MC1 Address service access issues and equity of health outcomes for priority communities, including LGBTIQ+ communities, multicultural communities, people with disability and rural and regional people, including more support for primary, community, home-based and virtual care, and addiction services.
- MC2 Enhance the provision of appropriate and culturally safe services, programs, and clinical trials for and as determined by Aboriginal people, embedding the principles of self-determination.
- MC4 Expand the delivery of high-quality cultural safety training for all staff to align with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety framework. This training should be delivered by independent, expert, community-controlled organisations or a Kinaway or Supply Nation certified Aboriginal business.

#### **Health service deliverables:**

- MC1 Partner with Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations, respected Aboriginal leaders and Elders, and Aboriginal communities to deliver healthcare improvements.
- MC2 Identify and prioritise the health, wellbeing and service needs of the Aboriginal catchment population and service users - including improved patient identification, discharge planning and outpatient care.
- MC2 Alignment of health service operating hours and the availability of hospital Aboriginal Health Liaison Officer workforce.
- MC4 Implement mandatory cultural safety training and assessment for all staff in alignment with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety framework, and developed and/or delivered by independent, expert, and community-controlled organisations, Kinaway or Supply Nation certified Aboriginal businesses.



## **A stronger workforce**

*There is an increased supply of critical roles that support safe, high-quality care. Victoria is a world leader in employee experience, with a focus on future roles, capabilities, and professional development. The workforce is regenerative and sustainable, bringing a diversity of skills and experiences that reflect the people and communities it serves. As a result of a stronger workforce, Victorians receive the right care at the right time, closer to home.*

### **Goals**

- MD1 Improve employee experience across four initial focus areas to assure safe, high-quality care: leadership, health and safety, flexibility, and career development and agility.
- MD2 Explore new and contemporary models of care and practice, including future roles and capabilities.

Health service deliverables:

- MD1 Deliver programs to improve employee experience across four initial focus areas: leadership, safety and wellbeing, flexibility, and career development and agility.
- MD1 Evaluate the wellbeing and safety program and its improvement on workforce wellbeing.
- MD2 Implement new and contemporary models of care and practice, including future roles and building capability for multidisciplinary practice.

## **Moving from competition to collaboration**

*Share knowledge, information and resources with partner health and wellbeing services and care providers. This will allow patients to experience one health, wellbeing and care system through connected digital health information, evidence, and data flows, enabled by advanced interoperable platforms.*

### **Goals**

- ME1 Partner with other organisations (e.g., community health, ACCHOs, PHNs, General Practice, and private health) to drive further collaboration and build a more integrated system.
- ME2 Engage in integrated planning and service design approaches while assuring consistent and strong clinical governance with partners to connect the system to deliver seamless and sustainable care pathways and build sector collaboration.

Health service deliverables:

- ME1 Partner with our sub regional catchment Community to develop integrated service models that will provide coordinated care to patients and support patients following hospital discharge.
- ME2 Partner with Regional, sub-regional or local health services to assess regional health needs assessment to develop a population health plan.
- ME2 Undertake joint clinical service planning with local and regional health services and the community

## Part B: Performance Priorities

The *Victorian Health Services Performance Monitoring Framework* (PMF) outlines the Government's approach to overseeing the performance of Victorian health services. Further information is available at the [Funding, Performance and Accountability webpage](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/funding-performance-accountability/performance-monitoring-framework) <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/funding-performance-accountability/performance-monitoring-framework>>.

As the PMF states, while the Statement of Priorities sets out the annual high level strategic performance priorities, health services remain comprehensively accountable for quality and safety, good governance and leadership, access and timeliness, and financial sustainability, as defined in relevant legislation. This means that performance against these broader accountabilities will continue to be monitored based on a comprehensive set of quantitative metrics and qualitative intelligence and managed and raised with health services as needed.

### High quality and safe care:

Key Performance Measure	Target
<b>Infection prevention and control</b>	
Percentage of healthcare workers immunised for influenza	94%
<b>Continuing care</b>	
Average change in the functional independence measure (FIM) score per day of care for rehabilitation separations	≥ 0.645
<b>Adverse events</b>	
Percentage of reported sentinel events for which a root cause analysis (RCA) report was submitted within 30 business days from notification of the event	All RCA reports submitted within 30 business days
<b>Aged care</b>	
Public sector residential aged care services overall star rating	Minimum rating of 3 stars
<b>Patient experience</b>	
Percentage of patients who reported positive experiences of their hospital stay	95%
<b>Aboriginal Health</b>	
The gap between the number of Aboriginal patients who discharged against medical advice <sup>2</sup> compared to non-Aboriginal patients	0%
The gap between the number of Aboriginal patients who 'did not wait' presenting to hospital emergency departments non-Aboriginal patients	0%

<sup>2</sup> Further work will be undertaken on leave event measures terminology that better captures patient experience and Aboriginal community's holistic understanding of health and wellbeing.

## Strong governance, leadership, and culture

Key Performance Measure	Target
<b>Organisational culture</b>	
People matter survey – Percentage of staff with an overall positive response to safety culture survey questions.	80%

## Timely access to care

Key Performance Measure	Target
<b>Emergency Care</b>	
Percentage of patients transferred from ambulance to emergency department within 40 minutes <sup>3</sup>	4% improvement on 23-24 performance
Number of emergency patients with a length of stay in the ED greater than 24 hours	Zero
Mean ED length of stay (admitted) in minutes <sup>4</sup>	7% improvement on 23-24 performance
Mean ED length of stay (non-admitted) in minutes <sup>5</sup>	3% improvement on 23-24 performance
Inpatient length of stay in minutes	3% improvement on 23-24 performance
<b>Specialist Clinics</b>	
Percentage of patients referred by a GP or external specialist who attended a first appointment within the recommended timeframe <sup>6</sup>	95%
<b>Home Based Care</b>	
Percentage of admitted bed days delivered at home	Equal to or better than prior year result

## Effective financial management

Key Performance Measure	Target
Operating result (\$M)	0.00
Adjusted current asset ratio	0.7 or 3% improvement from health service base target
Variance between forecast and actual Net result from transactions (NRFT) for the current financial year ending 30 June	5% movement in forecast revenue and expenditure forecasts

<sup>3</sup> Health services are expected to progress towards the target of 90% by demonstrating improvement of 4% or achieving at least 80% for this current year.

<sup>4</sup> Services that have reached 306 minutes are expected to maintain or improve performance for this measure.

<sup>5</sup> Services that have reached 240 minutes are expected to maintain or improve performance for this measure.

<sup>6</sup> 30 days for urgent patients, 365 days for routine patients

# Part C: Activity and Funding

The performance and financial framework within which state government-funded organisations operate is described in *The Policy and Funding Guidelines – Funding Rules*. The Funding Rules detail funding and pricing arrangements and provide modelled budgets and targets for a range of programs. The [Policy and Funding Guidelines](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/policy-and-funding-guidelines-for-health-services) webpage <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/policy-and-funding-guidelines-for-health-services>>.

Period 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025

**Table 1 Swan Hill District Health funding summary for 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025**

Funding Type	Activity	Budget (\$'000)
<b>Consolidated Activity Funding</b>		
Acute admitted, subacute admitted, emergency services, non-admitted NWAU	8,537	58,949
<b>Acute Admitted</b>		
Acute admitted DVA	24	156
Acute admitted TAC	73	408
Other admitted		6,014
<b>Acute Non-Admitted</b>		
Emergency services		7
<b>Subacute/Non-Acute, Admitted &amp; Non-admitted</b>		
Palliative care non-admitted		976
Subacute - DVA	15	95
Health Independence Program - DVA		1
<b>Aged Care</b>		
Residential aged care	26,397	1,928
HACC	5,093	379
Aged care other		56
<b>Primary Health</b>		
Community health / primary care programs	8,815	1,227
Community health other		445
<b>Other</b>		
Health workforce	18	971
Other specified funding		339
<b>Total Funding</b>		<b>71,952</b>

Please note:

- Base level funding, related services and activity levels outlined within the Policy and Funding Guidelines are subject to change throughout the year. Further information about the department's approach to funding and price setting for specific clinical activities and funding policy changes is also available from [Health Services](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/policy-and-funding-guidelines-for-health-services)  
<<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/policy-and-funding-guidelines-for-health-services>>
- Each funding type row (e.g., “emergency services”) comprises a mix of activity-based funding and block grants. Funding depends on the service profile. For further details, refer to the Policy and funding guidelines for health services (see the above point for the link).
- In situations where a change is required to Part C, changes to the agreement will be actioned through an exchange of letters between the department and the health service's Chief Executive Officer.

## Part D: Commonwealth Funding Contribution

Commonwealth funding contribution is provided by the 2024-25 Commonwealth budget, which is based on estimates. This is updated throughout the year based on updated activity levels by the Administrator of the National Health Funding Pool.

Commonwealth funding is based on actual activity; there may be adjustments to funding throughout the year as a result of reconciliations and other factors.

**Table 2 Commonwealth contribution for the period 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025**

Funding Type	Number of services (NWAU)	Funding allocation (\$)
Victorian Efficient Price		\$6,883 per NWAU
Activity based funding allocation (National Health Reform Agreement in-scope services)		
Acute admitted	6,153	44,793,219
Sub-acute	337	3,293,501
Emergency department	1,218	8,382,186
Non-admitted	830	5,710,687
<b>Total activity based funding allocation</b>	<b>8,537</b>	<b>62,179,593</b>
Block funding allocation		
Teaching, training, and research		927,800
<b>Total block funding allocation</b>		<b>927,800</b>
<b>Total NHRA in-scope funding allocation</b>		<b>63,107,393</b>

Please note:

- In situations where a change is required to Part D, changes to the agreement will be actioned through an exchange of letters between the department and the Health Service Chief Executive Officer. Letters will be made publicly available.
- Numbers may differ from systems due to rounding.
- As funding paid through the pool includes price and non-price grants, the funding allocated is not wholly the product of price multiplied by the activity.

# Accountability and funding requirements

The health service must comply with:

- All laws applicable to it.
- The *National Health Reform Agreement*.
- All applicable requirements, policies, terms, or conditions of funding specified or referred to in the Department of Health *Policy and Funding Guidelines 2024-25*.
- Policies, procedures, and appropriate internal controls to ensure the accurate and timely submission of data to the Department of Health.
- All applicable policies and guidelines issued by the Department of Health from time to time and notified to the health service.
- Where applicable, all terms and conditions specified in an agreement between the health service and the Department of Health relating to the provision of health services are in force at any time during the 2024-25 financial year.
- Relevant standards for programs that have been adopted, e.g., the International Organisation for Standardisation standards and AS/NZS 4801:2001, Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems, or an equivalent standard.
- Where applicable, this includes the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards ('NSQHS standards') as accredited through the Australian Health Service Safety and Quality Accreditation Scheme.
- Specific to DHSV: in relation to the School Dental Project Plan, as agreed and specified by both parties, including meeting the requirements outlined in the School Licence Agreement.
- Any other relevant, applicable statutory, regulatory or accountability rules, policies, plans, procedures, or publications.

## Signing Page

The Secretary, Department of Health and the health service board chairperson agree that funding will be provided to enable the health service to meet its service obligations and performance requirements as outlined in this Statement of Priorities.



**Debra Sudano**

**Executive Director, North East  
Health Services, South East Health  
Services, Statewide Performance**

**Hospitals and Health Services**

**Department of Health**

**Date: 21/11/2024**



**Janice Kelly**

**Chairperson**

**Swan Hill District Health**

**Date: 21/11/2024**