

Statement of Priorities

2025-26 Agreement between the Minister for Health and Oral Health
Victoria

OFFICIAL



Department
of Health

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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.

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

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

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Background

Statements 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 to the annual Statement of Priorities are consistent with sections 40G, 65ZFA, 65ZFB, and section 26 of the *Health Services Act 1988*.

Statements of Priorities are consistent with the health services' strategic plans and aligned to government policy directions and priorities. For 2025-26, the Statements of Priorities continue 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.

Statements of Priorities consist of three 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.

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 2025-26* (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

Statements of Priorities are aligned to government policy directions and priorities. Ministerial priorities are reflected in the Statements of Priorities and the Department of Health Strategic Plan 2023-27 (Strategic Plan).

In 2025-26, these include the following Ministerial priorities:

For the **overall health system**:

1. A reformed health system, shifting from competition to collaboration through the establishment of Local Health Service Networks, 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 supported to develop professionally. This is achieved through improved workforce planning, an increased supply of priority roles, world leading employee experience, and a strategic focus on future roles, capabilities, professional development, and promoting a safe workplace.
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 and building stronger relationships with local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.
 - b. Health care models for priority populations, including people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ communities and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
 - c. Improved access to health services by rural and regional patients through the establishment of patient referral pathways by Local Health Service Networks.
 - d. Women's health, including improved access to abortion, public fertility services and reduced gender health disparities across the life course, supported through the roll out of new services and better coordinated care.
5. A continued focus on improving the quality and safety of care, including through strengthening clinical governance systems and a culture of reporting and transparency under the Victorian Clinical Governance Framework.
6. Provide timely access to services by implementing strategies that connect people to the right care and improve the whole of system patient flow.
7. A financially responsible and sustainable health system, reflected in balanced health service budgets.
8. Public health and population health initiatives, including through the operation of Local Public Health Units, to contribute to better health outcomes among Victorians through prevention strategies and early interventions.

For the **mental health** system:

9. A mental health and well-being system that delivers inclusive, personalised, compassionate, integrated care so all Victorians are supported to live and experience the life they want:
 - a. Consumers have choice and agency and access to high quality and holistic care, as well as leadership roles
 - b. Carers, families, supports and kin: Are recognised, respected, and supported, including in leadership roles.
 - c. Workforces are diverse, multidisciplinary, and collaborative, and feel safe, valued, and supported.
 - d. Aboriginal communities: Self-determination and cultural safety are upheld, and physical, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects of wellbeing are central and interconnected.
 - e. Diverse communities: Are reflected and embraced in our services and models of care
10. Mental health services are focused on continuously improving performance.
11. Mental health services maintain service levels whilst transitioning to activity-based funding.

Supporting services for **older Victorians**:

12. 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.
13. 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.

Part A: Department of Health Strategic Plan

The Statement of Priorities are aligned with the Strategic Plan¹.

Oral Health Victoria will contribute to the Strategic Plan 2023-27 by agreeing to the following priorities:

Strategic Priorities

Innovate and improve access and care

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.

Goal

- Align with the Victorian Clinical Governance Framework to strengthen clinical governance systems, ensuring safe, high-quality care.
- Address service access issues and equity of health outcomes for rural and regional people including more support for primary, community, home-based and virtual care services.
- Reduce low value care and duplication to achieve better outcomes for people and improved safety and quality.

OHV deliverables:

1. Demonstrate high quality care in which consumer engagement and input is actively sought, facilitated and used to drive system change to improve consumer experience and outcomes
2. Ensure that health service reporting, reviews and decision-making are underpinned by a safety culture and systems that are transparent, accurate and fair for staff and consumers.
3. In collaboration with the department, continue to reduce low value care through the ongoing review of item codes to incentivise prevention and early intervention, and decrease funding for low value care.
4. Continue the rollout of Smile Squad and specialised services to support rural and regional Victoria to access oral health care.

¹ 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>>

Prudent, sustainable and effective use of resources

We are innovative and resourceful in balancing improved patient care, operational performance, and system management to ensure a financially secure health system. We invest in a skilled and future-ready workforce, maintaining a modern, safe, and resilient healthcare system for all Victorians.

Goal

- Develop and implement initiatives to strengthen financial sustainability. By delivering sustainable, responsible budgets, we can ensure a well-managed, viable, and sustainable health system for the future.

OHV deliverables:

1. Deliver the key initiatives outlined in the Budget Action Plan within Government parameters.
2. 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.
3. In collaboration with the department, contribute to National Dental Reform, including input to the development of funding frameworks, outcomes measures and funding models that support a shift to value-based healthcare to achieve system wide funding reform.
4. Ongoing development and implementation of the strategy to increase the utilisation of the Child Dental Benefits Schedule to optimise all available funding sources and increase service capacity across the sector.

A stronger workforce

We strive to foster an equitable, skilled and supported workforce that builds professional capabilities to meet current and future roles.

Goal

- Position Victoria as a leader in employee experience, capability, and capacity by focusing on future roles and professional development in line with the Victorian Health Workforce Strategy to ensure a regenerative and sustainable workforce.

OHV deliverables:

1. Implement processes that improve employee experience across four initial focus areas—leadership, health and safety, flexibility, career development and agility—to ensure safe, high-quality care and compliance with Health Service obligations under the Gender Equality Act 2020.
2. Explore or evaluate new and contemporary models of care and practice, including future roles and building capability for multidisciplinary practice.
3. Continue with the implementation of the Workforce Culture and Engagement Strategy 2024 – 2027. With a focus on the novice workforce pipeline as outlined in the Smile Squad Accelerated Delivery Action Plan (ADAP).

Improving Aboriginal health and wellbeing

Strengthen cultural safety in Victoria's health service system by fostering strong connections to Aboriginal culture, creating a holistic, accessible, and empowering health system.

Goal

- Enhance Delivery and Access to Culturally Safe Services, fostering strong connections to culture. Address racism and provide Aboriginal people with culturally safe healthcare and referral pathways between mainstream and community-controlled health services.

OHV deliverables:

1. Deliver high-quality cultural safety training to all executives and staff using independent, expert, community-controlled organisations or a registered Aboriginal business.
2. Health services actively and regularly engage with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations or Aboriginal leaders in local catchments about the health and wellbeing needs of the Community.
3. Ensure culturally appropriate systems for identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and implement responsive discharge plans and referral pathways.
4. Continue roll out of Aboriginal Health Practitioner-led Fluoride Varnish program in participating Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs).
5. Continue with the implementation of OHV's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Moving from Competition to Collaboration

We are committed to transforming Victoria's health system by partnering with care providers and health services to share knowledge, information, and resources. Through interoperable digital platforms, we create a seamlessly connected, data-driven ecosystem that ensures a unified, high-quality, and sustainable care experience for all Victorians.

Goal

- Collaborate with other organisations and health services within the Local Health Service Network to enhance integration through coordinated planning, service design, and robust clinical governance. This partnership aims to ensure seamless, sustainable healthcare delivery pathways while fostering deep sector collaboration.

OHV deliverables:

1. Meet all objectives agreed to in the Local Health Service Network "Statement of Expectations" across priority areas (access, equity and flow, workforce, safety and quality, and shared services).
2. Partner with Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Organisations with community dental services to achieve and sustain better oral health outcomes and deliver culturally appropriate oral health promotion resources.
3. Continue implementation of the Oral Cancer Screening and Prevention Program, including the roll-out of oral cancer education and training for non-oral health professionals, such as general practitioners.

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 Statements of Priorities set 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
Infection prevention and control	
Percentage of healthcare workers immunised for influenza	94%
Patient experience	
Patient satisfaction at the Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne, as measured by the Patient Reported Experience Measure Survey (PREMS)	85%

Strong governance, leadership, and culture

Key Performance Measure	Target
Organisational culture	
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
Emergency Care	
Percentage of Dental Emergency Triage Category 1 clients treated within 24 hours	90%
Percentage of Dental Emergency Triage Category 2 clients treated within 7 days	80%
Percentage of Dental Emergency Triage Category 3 clients treated within 14 days	75%
General and Denture Care	
Number of hospital initiated postponements per 100 scheduled appointments.	3
Waiting time for prosthodontics, endodontic, and orthodontics specialist services patients (months)	15
Waiting time for other dental specialist services patients (months)	9

Key Performance Measure	Target
Waiting time for general care (months)	23
Waiting time for denture care (months)	22
Waiting time for priority denture care (months)	3
Activity	
Total number of individuals treated ^{2,3}	365,000
Priority and emergency clients treated ^{3,3}	273,800
Dental Weighted Activity Units (DWAUs) ^{3,3}	351,488

Oral health promotion

Key Performance Measure	Target
Children participating in Smiles 4 Miles	60,000

School dental program

Key Performance Measure	Target
Schools visited by Smile Squad (annual by December) ⁴	575
Students examined by Smile Squad (annual by December) ⁴	69,300
Students receiving treatment by Smile Squad (annual by December) ⁴	20,800

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 the forecast and actual operating result (OR) as a percentage of the forecast OR for the current financial year ending 30 Jun	5% movement in forecast revenue and expenditure forecasts

² Targets reflect additional activity to be delivered under the proposed *Federation Funding Agreement – Schedule on Public Dental Services for Adults*.

³ Targets exclude services provided via the *Child Dental Benefits Schedule*.

⁴ School Dental Program targets align with Budget Paper No. 3 *Service Delivery*. Additional negotiated deliverables are in accordance with agreed arrangements.

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 2025 – 30 June 2026

Table 1 Oral Health Victoria funding summary for 1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026

Funding Type	Activity	Budget (\$'000)
Oral Cancer Screening & Preventions Program	16454	574
Service System Resourcing and Development ⁵	27010	18,882
Annual Provisions/Minor Works	27011	1,151
Oral Health Promotion	27017	3,110
RDHM Dental Care	27019	32,967
Workforce, Resourcing and Development	27020	2,473
Community Dental Care ⁶	27023	131,905
Total		191,061

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.

⁵ Includes funding under the following activities and activity numbers: Acute activity – Admitted Patients (11008); HealthSMART Services (11027); Dental Services Purchasing (27024); Clinical Leadership and Governance (27025); Capital Planning and Development (27026); Regional Service System Support (27028); Data Management and IT (27029).

⁶ Excludes proposed FFA funding (\$24,800,000) and Smile Squad (TBC)

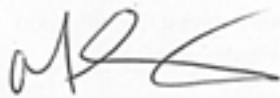
Accountability and funding requirements

The health service must comply with:

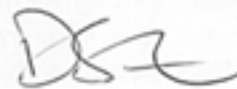
- All laws applicable to it.
- The *National Health Reform Agreement*.
- All applicable requirements, policies, terms, or conditions of funding specified or referred to in the Department of Health *Policy and Funding Guidelines 2025-26*.
- Policies, procedures, and appropriate internal controls to ensure 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 2025-26 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 OHV: 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 Minister for 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.



The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Date: 19/08/2025



Mr David Stevenson
Board Chair
Oral Health Victoria
Date: 19/8/2025