Statement of Priorities

2026-27 Agreement between the Minister for Ambulance Services and Ambulance Victoria

OFFICIAL

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Health

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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In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

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Background

The Statement of Priorities (SoP) is a key accountability agreement 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*.

The SoP is consistent with the health service's strategic plan and aligned to government policy directions and priorities. For 2026-27, the SoP continues to reference the *Department of Health Strategic Plan 2023-27* (Strategic Plan), which is refreshed annually. These annual agreements support the delivery of, or substantial progress towards, key shared objectives of high quality and safe care, strong governance leadership and culture, timely access to care, and effective financial management.

The SoP consists of three main parts:

- Part A outlines the strategic priorities and deliverables the health service will contribute to delivering in the year ahead.
- Part B sets out key performance measures and agreed targets.
- Part C details funding and associated activity.

The SoP, Policy and Funding Guidelines (PFG) and the *Victorian Health Service Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF) 2026-27* establish the conditions, expectations and oversight arrangements for health services.

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

Ministerial Priorities

The SoP is aligned with government policy directions and priorities. Ministerial priorities are reflected in the SoP and the Department of Health Strategic Plan 2023-27 (Strategic Plan).

In 2026-27, these include the following Ministerial priorities:

For the **overall health system**:

1. A reformed health system, shifting from competition to collaboration through the embedding of Local Health Service Networks, and with strengthened, formalised partnerships between health 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, and ensuring a safe workplace by reducing the impact of occupational violence and promoting a 'speak-up' culture.

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, including virtual and digitally enabled care, and improved discharge planning for Aboriginal patients and building stronger relationships with local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.

    b. Health care models, including appropriate virtual and digitally enabled 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, and appropriate use of virtual and digitally enabled care models.

    d. Women's health, including improved access to abortion, and reduced gender health disparities across the life course, supported through the roll out of new services, better coordinated care, and implementation of the Women's Pain Standard.

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, leveraging Local Health Service Network opportunities to collaborate and identify opportunities through shared services.

8. Public health and population health initiatives, including through the operation of Local Public Health Units, contribute to better health outcomes among Victorians through prevention strategies and early interventions.

9. More effective technology-enabled patient care and efficient administration through coordinated ICT planning, investment and delivery across Local Health Service Networks and Rural ICT Alliances, aligned to the Digital Health Roadmap.

10. Develop strategies to reduce the health service's climate and environment impact.

For the **mental health** system:

11. A mental health and well-being system that delivers inclusive, personalised, compassionate, integrated, and safe 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,

    b. Carers, families, supports, and kin: Are recognised, respected, and supported.

    c. Workforces are diverse, multidisciplinary, and collaborative, and feel safe, valued, and supported, including lived and living experience workforce in leadership roles,

    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.

12. Mental health services are focused on continuously improving performance to align with the Royal Commission recommendations.

13. Mental health services maintain service levels following the transition to activity-based funding.

14. Continue to grow and transform community mental health services with a focus on diverting demand away from crisis and inpatient care and supporting treatment in the community, closer to home.

Supporting services for **older Victorians**:

15. 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.

16. 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 SoP is aligned with the Strategic Plan[1]. Ambulance 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.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- 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.
- 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.
- Show evidence of a comprehensive training program approach that includes performance management, accountability, and continuous improvement.

Goal

Improve access to timely emergency care by implementing system-wide patient flow strategies that improve ambulance availability, connect patients to alternative services where safe and appropriate, and reduce ambulance response times.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- As a participant in the Timely Emergency Care (TEC) Program, Ambulance Victoria is required to implement all relevant standards outlined in the Standards for Safe and Timely Ambulance and Emergency Care for Victorians and complete regular reporting on progress.
- Expand the use of safe virtual care, including Video Assisted Triage and the Virtual Emergency Department.

[1] Link to 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

Partner with consumers and their families to improve the design and delivery of ambulance services.

Ambulance Victoria deliverable:

- Strengthen consumer engagement, education, and awareness activities to improve the quality and accessibility of Ambulance Victoria services.

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.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- 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.
- Deliver strategies to improve the financial capability of the organisation including development and implementation of an agreed financial improvement plan.

Goal

Strengthen the safety, reliability and resilience of critical ICT and clinical technologies to minimise clinical and operational risk and support continuity of care.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- Develop and implement prioritised investment and remediation plans for legacy and end-of-life ICT infrastructure, clinical systems and connected medical technologies.
- Provide timely and accurate reporting to the Department on ICT and cyber incidents, including escalation in line with Departmental incident management policies.

A stronger workforce

We strive to foster an equitable, skilled and supported workforce that builds professional capabilities to meet the healthcare needs of Victorians now and into the future.

Goal

Provide a safe, inclusive and well-supported working environment where people feel valued, connected and empowered.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- Implement processes to sustain workforce supply and fulfill obligations, including those under the Gender Equality Act 2020 by improving employee experience in leadership, health and safety, flexibility, career development, and agility to ensure safe, high-quality care.
- Implement actions under Ambulance Victoria's People Plan and address recommendations arising from the Legal and Social Issues Committee Inquiry into Ambulance Victoria.
- Strengthen Ambulance Victoria's ongoing work to support staff safety and wellbeing including through the implementation of Ambulance Victoria's Enterprise Agreement 2024 and Ambulance Victoria's (Management and Administrative Staff) Enterprise Agreement 2025.
- Design, implement and evaluate contemporary models of care and practice, including future roles and building capability for multidisciplinary practice.
- Collaborate with the department to improve prevention of and responses to occupational violence.
- Strengthen workforce digital skills and capabilities to support delivery of the Digital Health Roadmap, and new and evolving models of care.

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.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- Deliver high-quality cultural safety training to all executives and staff using independent, expert, community-controlled organisations or a registered Aboriginal business.
- Actively and regularly engage with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations or Aboriginal leaders in local catchments about the health and wellbeing needs of the Community.

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.

Goal

Collaborate with other organisations and health services 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.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- Continue to work with Triple Zero Victoria to provide efficient and effective progression of joint priorities.
- Enhance process and systems, including decision making tools, performance monitoring and reporting, to increase safe utilisation of alternative care pathways.
- Work with partners and stakeholders to support implementation of the Standards for Safe and Timely Ambulance and Emergency Care (STAEC) across all participating services.
- Work with the Department of Health and other stakeholders to progress implementation of Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPT) Reform.

Goal

Use the Digital Health Roadmap to guide coordinated digital investment and delivery, strengthening digital capability to support integrated, safe, and efficient models of care.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- Align local digital planning and investment with the Digital Health Roadmap and participate in shared governance and coordinated delivery of agreed statewide priority initiatives.

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>.

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
Infection prevention and control	
Percentage of healthcare workers immunised for influenza	94%
Patient experience	
Percentage of respondents who rated their overall experience with the ambulance service as satisfied or very satisfied	95%
Percentage of respondents who rated the level of care provided by paramedics as good or very good	95%
Percentage of patients experiencing severe cardiac or traumatic pain whose level of pain was reduced significantly	90%
Percentage of adult stroke patients transported to definitive care within 60 minutes	90%
Percentage of adult cardiac arrest patients surviving to hospital	50%
Percentage of adult cardiac arrest patients surviving to hospital discharge	25%

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 patients transferred from ambulance to emergency department within 40 minutes	80% OR 3% improvement from the same time last year

Key Performance Measure	Target
Percentage of triple zero cases where the caller receives advice or service from another health provider as an alternative to an emergency ambulance response – statewide	25% OR 5% improvement from the same time last year.
Average ambulance hospital clearing time	20 minutes
Percentage of emergency Code 1 incidents responded to within 15 minutes	85% OR 4% improvement from the same time last year
Percentage of emergency Priority 0 incidents responded to within 13 minutes	85% OR 3% improvement from the same time last year
Percentage of emergency (Code 1) incidents (modified Secondary Triage call start time) responded to within 15 minutes (REF01)	90% OR 4% improvement from the same time last year

Effective financial management

Key Performance Measure	Target
Statement of Priorities operating result ($M)	0.0
Variance between the forecast and actual operating result (OR) as a percentage of the forecast OR for the current financial year ending 30 June	4% movement in forecast revenue and expenditure forecasts
Average number of days to pay trade creditors	60 days

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 webpage <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/policy-and-funding-guidelines-for-health-services>.

Period 1 July 2026 – 30 June 2027

Funding Type	Activity	Budget ($'000)
Ambulance emergency		
Community service obligation emergency road and air transports		930,564
Ambulance non-emergency		
Community service obligation non-emergency road and air transports		166,028
Diversion and other specialist programs		
Secondary triage service		15,074
Other specialist services		108,216
Other		
Other specified funding		34,872
Total		**1,254,755**

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.
- 'PYA' denotes 'prior year adjustment'. PYA can apply to both under and over activity as recall and throughput respectively, and as well as reconciled to actual activity and/or cost. PYA is not restricted to activity-based funding, block funded grants may also be subject to PYA. Refer to the Policy and Funding Guidelines – Funding Rules for more information on PYA.
- Funding rows labelled as 'aggregated funding' 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.

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 2026-27.
- 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 2026-27 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 Oral Health Victoria: 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 Ambulance Services and the Ambulance Victoria chairperson agree that funding will be provided to the health service to enable the health service to meet its service obligations and performance requirements as outlined in this Statement of Priorities.



Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Health
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Special Minister of State

Date: 16/10/2026



Andrew Crisp AM APM

Chairperson
Ambulance Victoria

Date: 16 /10 /2026