

Heart health: improved services and better outcomes for Victorians

health

The Victorian health system provides a high standard of care to people with heart disease, with both public and private sectors working together to provide comprehensive care. Primary care services manage the risk factors of early heart disease and support people living with the effects of chronic disease; Ambulance Victoria and hospital emergency departments manage acute events; specialist cardiac centres provide surgical interventions and complex care, and a range of health services support cardiac rehabilitation and end-of-life care in both hospital and community settings.

Heart health

Heart health: improved services and better outcomes for Victorians (Heart health) builds on Victoria's existing system of cardiac care and provides a five-year plan to improve heart disease prevention efforts and enhance cardiac services to achieve better outcomes for Victorians with, or at risk of, heart disease.

To achieve the best possible outcomes for all Victorians, regardless of where they live, Heart health guides the planning of cardiac services across the full continuum from prevention to end-of-life care.

The four strategic Heart health directions are:

1. Promote healthy living and improve detection of the early stages of heart disease

The plan has an emphasis on the importance of healthy living, identifying risk factors and preventing disease and so complements the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2011–2015*. For those with early signs of disease, this direction focuses on greater health literacy and self-management, as well as improved assessment and early management of risk factors in primary care to reduce disease progression.

2. Better, faster access to time critical cardiac care

This direction focuses on maximising the system response to time-critical events, and recognises that surviving an acute event can be dependent on a rapid and effective response from both members of the community and the health system.

3. Improve services for people with heart disease

Accessing best practice care when it is needed and in the most appropriate setting is the focus of direction 3. Cardiac services should be based on evidence of best practice and provided as close as possible to where people live, with highly specialist services accessible to all. Care needs to be consistent, coordinated and tailored to the individual needs of people with heart disease.

4. Strengthen system performance

Direction 4 aims to strengthen system performance to ensure there is seamless transition between all stages of care and between all health service providers. Clinical leadership, performance monitoring and strengthening the cardiac workforce will drive continuous improvement across cardiac services and the health system, in turn delivering the best possible health outcomes.



Government action

The Victorian Government is committed to building on the strengths of the healthcare system to respond to the needs of people with, or at risk of developing heart disease. Key achievements include:

Funding

- An additional \$21.9 million invested over four years for the Heart Attack and Stroke initiative. This will be used to: enhance rapid response to heart attacks, particularly in country Victoria; better management and support for people with chronic heart failure; improve cardiac rehabilitation for those recovering from an acute cardiac event; and improve systems and processes to access specialist cardiac care. Specific projects for 2013–14 include:
 - \$1.5 million for a number of heart failure service improvement projects
 - \$750,000 for Ambulance Victoria to equip ambulances in rural Victoria with blood clot-dissolving drugs
 - \$500,000 for cardiac rehabilitation service improvement projects
 - \$250,000 to expand the Victorian Cardiac Outcomes Register
 - \$300,000 to improve referral to specialist cardiac services, particularly for people in outer metropolitan and rural areas.
- \$22.2 million over four years to fund the Life! Helping you prevent diabetes, heart disease and stroke program, to support people at high risk of these conditions.
- \$238.3 million over four years to fund People in Health, an initiative to boost training and development for the future Victorian health workforce. This will benefit a range of areas, including cardiac.

Capital, equipment and service development

- Provided \$15.6 million over three years to replace medical equipment to support cardiac services.
- Expanded the cardiac catheterisation service at Ballarat Health Services in 2011.
- Expanded cardiac catheterisation capacity at Peninsula Health in 2013 to provide a 7 day a week service.
- Established 10 new Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance Single Responder Units in Warrnambool, Horsham, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Wodonga, Sale, Bairnsdale, Wonthaggi and Swan Hill.

- Expanded ambulance services with 22 stations either built or refurbished; 58 new ambulance vehicles and appointment of 465 new ambulance and patient transfer officers.
- The Victorian Cardiac Clinical Network supported service developments, including:
 - introduction of point of care testing for serum troponin in south west Victoria, to aid in the diagnosis of heart attacks
 - development of statewide ST elevation myocardial infarction pathways in regional health services, to improve reperfusion therapy
 - development of a partnership model of care for Aboriginal patients at St Vincent's Hospital
 - establishment of the Victorian Cardiac Outcomes Register, to capture information about cardiac procedures, treatment and patient outcomes
 - the Heart Foundation's development of the *Victorian Heart Maps*, to provide local government area based information about cardiac disease and inform service planning.
- Funding current redevelopments of both Box Hill (\$447.5 million) and Bendigo Hospitals (\$630 million), which will include refurbished cardiac facilities, including new cardiac catheterisation laboratories.
- Funding redevelopment of Western Health (Sunshine), with capacity for a cardiac catheterisation service.
- Supporting proposed development of a cardiac catheterisation service at Albury Wodonga Health, in partnership with the Commonwealth Government.
- Identified priorities for cardiac service development at Goulburn Valley Health and Latrobe Regional Hospital.

Future service development will be guided by Heart health. For further information or a copy of the document go to www.health.vic.gov.au/hearthealth

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