



# State Budget 2009

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FROM THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH

Tuesday, 5 May, 2009

## **\$2.6 BILLION BUDGET BOOST TO BUILD A BETTER HEALTH SYSTEM**

More funding for hospitals, medical staff, disease prevention and dental clinics is the main priority of a **\$2.6 billion** boost to Victoria's health services in the 2009 State Budget.

The Minister for Health, Daniel Andrews, said Victoria's hospitals would share in **\$1.2 billion** to ensure Victoria's doctors, nurses and medical scientists continued to enjoy pay and conditions to help keep Victoria's health system the best in Australia.

"The Victorian health system is the best in Australia and the Brumby Labor Government is determined to continue to invest in our health system," Mr Andrews said.

"Rewarding our dedicated medical professionals is critical to maintaining truly world-class hospitals. The Brumby Labor Government is ensuring our medical professionals are appropriately remunerated for providing the best possible care to Victorians."

Further funding of **\$72.2 million** is being provided to ensure clinical placements for more than 4500 medical students, more than 12,000 nursing students, 600 dental students and almost 6500 allied health students.

"The Brumby Labor Government is taking action to improve our health system to support Victorian families in tough global times and for the future, with this budget alone securing up to 35,000 Victorian jobs," Mr Andrews said.

Mr Andrews said **\$780.9 million** over five years would significantly boost the capacity for hospitals to provide treatment in key areas of cancer treatment, acute care and sub-acute services; and a further **\$45 million** has been allocated for a one-off waiting list blitz.

The Brumby Labor Government has also allocated **\$262.3 million** to build better hospitals and health services – securing up to 230 jobs in construction – and deliver new equipment and technology, including:

- \$55 million for the first stage of the redevelopment of Bendigo Hospital;
- \$30 million to expand Geelong Hospital;
- \$20 million for new facilities at Ballarat Hospital;
- \$66 million to redevelop mental health services at Dandenong Hospital;
- \$26.2 million for the Warrnambool Hospital redevelopment;
- \$19 million to redevelop Alexandra Hospital and ambulance station;
- \$35 million for replacement medical equipment;
- \$10 million to complete the roll out of digital mammography equipment to BreastScreen Victoria services; and
- \$1.1 million to refurbish the Alfred Hospital's Burns Unit.

"Our Government has rebuilt the Royal Women's Hospital, and construction of the new \$1 billion Royal Children's Hospital is well underway," Mr Andrews said.

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"In the 2008 State Budget, we invested in maternity services. This year, our focus is on delivering important redevelopments in regional and rural communities.

"The Brumby Labor Government is building better hospitals to help provide a social safety net for Victorians in tough global times."

Mr Andrews said the 2009 State Budget also delivered funding to help Victoria maintain its leadership role in disease prevention and build on significant developments in tackling communicable disease, with **\$7.8 million** over four years for the Victorian Immunisation Strategy, targeting new strains of tuberculosis.

"The Brumby Labor Government is also taking action on public dental waiting lists, with **\$21.1 million** to increase the number of patients seen," Mr Andrews said.

"Our \$21.1 million boost to dental services builds on funding in previous budgets to invest in more dental services.

"Our new funding will provide extra dental treatments for pensioners at Ballarat, Moe, Sale, Knox, Footscray, Frankston and Geelong.

"As a result, more than 20,000 patients will be treated across the state over the next two years, and the Brumby Labor Government's expansion of the public dental system will see waiting times slashed. People needing urgent dental care will continue to be assessed within 24 hours."

The Minister for Senior Victorians, Mental Health and Community Services, Lisa Neville, said the 2009 State Budget also provided **\$60.6 million** in aged care initiatives, including programs to assist senior Victorians to stay healthy and maintain their independence at home.

"This includes expanding the Personal Alert Victoria program to provide more personal alert units to an additional 4000 senior Victorians," Ms Neville said

The Brumby Labor Government has allocated a further **\$84.6 million** for mental health reform – on top of the \$66 million project to redevelop mental health services at Dandenong Hospital.

"The Brumby Labor Government is also delivering an **\$86.9 million** boost to disability services and **\$8.3 million** to support Victorians with an Autism Spectrum Disorder," Ms Neville said.