

Tuesday, 5 May, 2009

## **\$52.8 MILLION TO BOOST VICTORIA'S DENTAL SERVICES AND PREVENTION PROGRAMS**

The Brumby Labor Government's commitment to preventative health continues in the 2009 State Budget, with a **\$52.8 million** boost to dental services, the roll-out of state-of-the-art breast cancer screening technology and a range of prevention programs.

The Minister for Health, Daniel Andrews, said the Brumby Labor Government was taking action on public dental waiting lists, with a **\$21.1 million** investment to provide more dental clinics and chairs and increase the number of patients seen.

"The Brumby Labor Government is making the right investments to support Victorian families in tough global times, with this budget alone securing up to 35,000 jobs," 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."

Mr Andrews said the Brumby Labor Government's focus on cancer would continue, with the 2009 State Budget allocating **\$10 million** to roll-out of digital mammography equipment in BreastScreen Victoria services.

"This breast screening expansion will upgrade old analogue equipment, resulting in quicker and more efficient screening and improve the early detection of cancer," Mr Andrews said.

"Breast cancer is the most common cancer affecting women in Victoria and the third-most common new cancer, with 3057 new cases and 707 deaths annually.

"The Brumby Labor Government is supporting families by ensuring Victorian women have access to the latest breast cancer screening technology, to detect breast cancer earlier and increase the chances of fighting it."

Mr Andrews said a **\$23.9 million** boost to the Hospital Admission Risk Program would improve the management and treatment of chronic illnesses and conditions in the community before they develop to the extent of needing a hospital stay.

The Budget also provides **\$7.8 million** over four years, launching a concerted program to ensure new strains of tuberculosis do not take hold; and build on existing communicable disease programs.