

VHA congratulates new Labor Government

1 December 2014

The Victorian Healthcare Association (VHA) has congratulated Premier-elect Daniel Andrews and the Victorian Labor Party for their election victory on Saturday 29 November.

The VHA looks forward to engaging with the new government to ensure the Victorian health system is well-placed to meet rapidly increasing demand for services.

“This means placing more emphasis on community-based care; making sure that funding keeps pace with population growth and cost inflation; using information technology to support the seamless delivery of care; and ensuring that people can access elective surgery within clinically appropriate times,” VHA Acting Chief Executive, Tom Symondson, said.

“Victoria is not a homogenous state so, while we have a coordinated health system, individual health services need the ability to respond to the unique characteristics of their communities, whether for specific health needs or to address critical shortages. We have an extremely effective health system, but it is under incredible pressure.”

Nearly 30 per cent of Victoria’s finances are already consumed by health¹ and the state’s population is set to increase by nearly 20 per cent over the next seven years.² The over-75 population will increase by 40 per cent in metropolitan Melbourne and 29 per cent in regional Victoria – and these people use health services five times more than those aged under 75.³

“Increasingly scarce resources across the state and reduced hospital funding from the Commonwealth highlight the importance of a well-funded primary and community health sector to reduce the demand for expensive hospital care,” Mr Symondson said.

“We also need to grow funding for our rural health services, which are ignored all too often, and services for our ageing community.”

The VHA welcomes the commitment in Victorian Labor’s election platform to “an increased focus on prevention, community and primary health services, care in the home and health promotion, while maintaining the highest standards of hospital care.” Labor says it will:

- fund community health services properly so they deliver quality primary health care at the local level, especially to those most in need
- support the development and delivery of integrated and innovative primary health care through community health services
- enhance the role of community health services to deliver more comprehensive preventative programs, such as diabetes management, dental health, physical activity and osteoporosis prevention, self-esteem programs and chronic pain management programs.

¹ Source: The Age, “State budget 2014: key points”, May 6 2014

² Represents projected population increase from June 2011 to June 2021.

³ Source: Victorian Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure, “Victoria in Future 2014”, May 2014

³ Source: Victorian Department of Health, “Metropolitan Health Plan Technical Paper”, 2011, p45



Background notes

The [VHA election platform](#) provides a road map for system design on this and other issues that ensures:

- more emphasis is placed on prevention and community-based care, including a clear primary care plan
- health services have greater autonomy to plan and manage their services, particularly in relation to capital planning
- funding keeps pace with population growth and cost inflation
- information technology is used to support integrated care
- supply is more closely matched with demand.

A list of Victorian Labor's election commitments may be downloaded from the [VHA website](#)

For more information contact

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