

In the run up to the Victorian Election on Saturday 24 November, the VHA will provide updates on the latest policy announcements in the Victorian Election Alert as the parties share their vision for health.

The VHA will compare announcements to the VHA's 2018 Victorian Election positions and assist policy watchers to understand how they will impact on the health system. This is to help ensure that readers are well prepared ahead of the November election and aware of all the announcements.

A full list of health policies will be published before the election, as well as a scorecard of these policies.

However, after receiving feedback, the decision has been made to feature the Victorian Election Alert in the VHA Update from next week. Thank you for your support in wanting to receive this information, the VHA hopes you will continue to follow the VHA Update to keep informed of developments. The content of the first edition of the VHA Alert is displayed below, so that you are up to date before the next release of the VHA Update.

All announcements are displayed in the table below; they will be updated in every edition by the VHA. Further analysis on selected policies is also available further down.

Please let the VHA know if you would like further information on any of the policies below, or feedback to the VHA on any concerns that you may have on the policies. Contact Ben Rogers via email or phone (03)9094 7714.

Party	Announcement	Funding	Members Impacted	Source
Labor	National Centre for Farmer Health	\$4m	Local services and wider regional members.	Premier
Labor	Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Development Fund	\$50m	All services.	Premier
Labor	Advocacy funding to allow disability advocacy organisations to help an extra 300 people a year – with a particular focus on those who need additional support or have complex needs.	\$6m	Services that provide disability services and services that provide services to people with a disability.	Labor
Labor	Re-development of Frankston Hospital	\$562m	Local services.	Labor
Labor	Help implement Victorian Carer Strategy 2018-22	\$53.5m	Community health services.	Premier
Labor	Expansion of the Angliss Hospital	\$170m	Eastern Health mainly, but the healthcare hub for older people could help wider older person healthcare providers.	Premier
Labor	Build new Footscray Hospital	\$1.5bn	Western Health and its other sites will mainly benefit, but the increased capacity, especially around emergency care, should relieve pressure	Premier

			for other Melbourne hospitals.	
Coalition	National Centre for Farmer Health	\$4m	Local services and wider regional members.	Mary Wooldridge
Coalition	Fund the Bowel Cancer Action Plan	\$2m	Health services that provide colonoscopy services.	Liberal
Coalition	Supplying free flu vaccines for all Victorian children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years.	\$7m	Health services that provide primary health services such as immunisation.	Liberal
Coalition	Mandatory drug and alcohol treatment for young people whose offending or risky behaviour is a result of severe substance abuse.	\$30m to create new facilities, \$20m annually thereafter to run the facilities	There has been no information supplied about who will run the facility.	Liberal
Coalition	Brighter Futures fund to establish integrated children's centres in Victoria's most disadvantaged rural and regional areas.	\$80m	Rural and regional health services.	Nationals
Coalition	Community based palliative care in Victoria	\$140m	Services that provide in community palliative care .	Liberal
Coalition	Upgrade the Sandringham Hospital through investing in new outpatient facilities	\$2.5m	Local services.	Matthew Guy
Coalition	Expansion of home and community care and support for Victorians with chronic disease and other conditions	\$175m	All services who provide hospital in the home services.	Liberal
Coalition	Build a new West Gippsland Hospital, new theatres and emergency department at Warrnambool Hospital	Unknown	Local services.	Liberal
Coalition	Build a residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre for Mildura	\$7m	Local services.	Nationals
Coalition	Develop a comprehensive state-wide health workforce strategy	\$1m	All services.	Liberal
Coalition	Expanded mental health support for members of Victoria Police, emergency services and ambulance workers.	\$6m	Members with ambulance services.	Liberal
Coalition	Support for children with autism	\$50m	Members who provide childhood disability services.	Liberal
Coalition	Purchase four new public robots located at Austin and Mercy Health, Monash Health, Western Health and Bendigo Health.	\$20m	Local services. Any hospital member could benefit if they choose to try and be involved.	Liberal

Expansion of the Angliss Hospital

Announcement: On Tuesday 25 September, the Labor Party announced that a newly-elected Labor

Government would invest \$170m to expand Angliss Hospital and build a new aged care facility at the nearby Wantirna Health site.

This would deliver the next stage of the Angliss Hospital expansion, providing an additional 25 new hospital beds, as well as a new 120-bed aged care facility.

The announcement of stage 2 of the Angliss Hospital expansion came at the unveiling of a \$20m new intensive care unit, second short-stay unit, refurbished paediatric area and new mental health spaces in the emergency department.

The new aged care facility will include 60 high care beds and 60 aged care mental health beds and will complement the existing geriatric medicine hospital and palliative care services already offered at the site, creating a healthcare hub for older residents in Melbourne's east.

Reaction: The VHA welcomes this announcement, and it is positive news for Eastern Health, however we urge all parties to develop a transparent and needs based strategy to guide investment in public hospitals as set out in our own Election Positions.

Analysis: It is welcome to see the investment in care for older people and the recognition that services must be different to meet their needs. It is hoped that this integrated 'hub' approach will be delivered for older residents across Victoria soon and not just in Melbourne's east. This does also suggest that there is an appreciation by the Government that more integrated approaches may be the best option to dealing with certain health needs, which is something that the VHA and its members want to see applied to other areas of the health system.

There have been major health infrastructure announcements by the two largest parties, with a number of hospitals promised improvement or expansion. Yet, not one of these projects has been jointly agreed by the two, suggesting political reasoning behind the decisions. However, with other hospitals struggling due to poor infrastructure, it is essential that further infrastructure funding is found and organised in a transparent manner so all Victorians can benefit.

State-wide health workforce strategy

Announcement: On Sunday 9 September, the Liberal Party announced that, if elected, they would introduce a state-wide health workforce strategy.

The strategy will be developed by a taskforce that will be immediately convened and include health and community health services, colleges, professional associations and training organisations, unions and peak groups to develop and help deliver the plan.

Reaction: The VHA welcomes the support for a policy that was the cornerstone of its own Election Positions. However, it is crucial that all organisations within the healthcare system are able to contribute to the strategy.

Analysis: This announcement would impact all members and the VHA will advocate that all interested services have a chance to contribute.

That the Liberal Party are willing to support a policy from the VHA's 2018 Victorian Election Positions, with the wording almost identical, suggests that there may be further opportunities to influence the opposition's electoral policy. The adoption of this position is a welcome step forward.