

Statement of Priorities 2023-24 for Ambulance Victoria

OFFICIAL

Department of Health
Statement of Priorities
2023-24



Department
of Health

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The department proudly acknowledges Victoria's Aboriginal communities and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders past and present.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life and how this enriches us.

We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards the equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.

To receive this document in an accessible format, phone using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or [Commissioning and System Improvement; Accountability on](#) <Accountability@health.vic.gov.au>

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Available at [The Department of Health Statements of Priorities](#)

<<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/funding-performance-accountability/statements-of-priorities>>

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Background

Statement of Priorities are the key accountability agreements between the Victorian State Government and Victorian publicly funded health, mental health and ambulance services. The content and process for preparation and agreement of the annual Statement of Priorities is consistent with sections 40G, 65ZFA, 65ZFB and section 26 of the *Health Services Act 1988*.

Statement of Priorities are consistent with the health services' strategic plans and aligned to government policy directions and priorities. For 2023-24, the Statement of Priorities also refer to the *Department of Health Strategic Plan 2023-27* (Strategic Plan). The annual agreements support the delivery of, or substantial progress towards, the key shared objectives of quality and safety, good governance and leadership, access and timeliness, and financial sustainability.

Statement of Priorities consists of four main parts:

- Part A provides the strategic priorities for the health service to contribute to in the year ahead.
- Part B lists the performance priorities and agreed targets.
- Part C lists funding and associated activity.
- Part D forms the service agreement between each health service and the state of Victoria for the purposes of the National Health Reform Agreement.

Performance expectations and mechanisms used by the Department of Health (the department) to monitor and manage performance are described in the *Victorian Health Service Performance Monitoring Framework 2023-24* (The Framework).

High standards of governance, transparency and accountability are essential. In this context, the Victorian Government commits to publish Statements of Priorities each year and present data on the performance of our health system in the public domain.

Strategic Priorities

The department on behalf of government delivers policies, programs and services that support and enhance the health and wellbeing of all Victorians. The department's vision is to create a future where Victorians are the healthiest people in the world. A Victoria where children and people thrive, where workplaces are productive and safe, and where communities are more connected.

The department's job is to support Victorians to stay healthy and safe; and to deliver a world-class healthcare system that ensures every single Victorian can access safe, quality care that leads to better health outcomes for all.

To fulfil these obligations, the department has developed the *Department of Health Strategic Plan 2023-27* (Strategic Plan) with seven guiding strategic priorities, to shape the health system's direction. Health services will contribute to the department's strategic priorities through signing and enacting the Statement of Priorities. The seven strategic priorities are:

- Keeping people healthy and well in the community
- Providing care closer to home
- Keep innovating and improving care
- Improving Aboriginal health and wellbeing
- Moving from competition to collaboration
- A stronger and more sustainable workforce
- A safe and sustainable health, wellbeing and care system

Government Commitments

The Victorian Budget 2023–24 (the budget) continues to invest in building hospitals, supporting our health system to meet growing demand and supporting our hardworking healthcare workers to ensure Victorians get the care they need, close to home. This budget provides investment in essential services including:

- \$1.5 billion to boost deferred elective surgery and ease the pressure on our hospitals.
- \$776 million for critical bed-based services, alcohol and other drug services, infrastructure, earlier support in community mental health services and the roll-out of the new Mental Health and Wellbeing Act.
- \$320 million to plan the delivery of major investments at seven hospitals across the state to ensure Victorians receive the highest quality healthcare.
- A \$270 million investment in our health workforce to make it free to study nursing and midwifery for nurses that join the public health system.
- A \$201 million system wide boost to support timely emergency care, including more ambulance services and improvements to emergency department programs, to get patients the care they need as quickly as possible.
- \$162 million for better aged care services across regional Victoria, to build new public aged care services in Cohuna, Maffra and Numurkah.
- \$157 million for critical bed-based mental health services across our state including more Hospital in the Home beds for Barwon Health, improving in-home mental health care for acutely unwell residents across the Geelong region.
- \$154 million to give women's health the focus and funding it deserves, including 20 new comprehensive women's health clinics at public hospitals.

Part A: Department of Health Strategic Plan

The Statement of Priorities are aligned with the [Strategic Plan 2023-27](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/our-strategic-plan-2023-27).
<<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/our-strategic-plan-2023-27>>.

Ambulance Victoria will contribute to the Strategic Plan 2023-27 by agreeing to the following priorities:

Ministerial Priorities

- Provide timely emergency responses to the most urgent patients and connect people to alternative services where safe and appropriate.
- Ensure Ambulance Victoria is a safe, fair and inclusive workplace where people are fulfilled and supported to develop throughout their careers.
- Deliver priority reforms and election commitments.
- Build partnerships with consumers and key stakeholders across the health system and emergency services, to improve patient outcomes and experiences.
- Embed a contemporary and efficient governance model that optimises Ambulance Victoria's organisational performance.
- Ensure an efficient and financially sustainable service delivery model.
- Deliver culturally safe services to Aboriginal people and support improved aboriginal health outcomes.
- Improve Aboriginal health and wellbeing outcomes, achieved through self-determination and commitment to the priorities of the Victorian Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Partnership Agreement Action Plan 2023-2025.

System Priorities

Excellence in clinical governance

We aim for the best patient experience and care outcomes by assuring safe practice, leadership of safety, an engaged and capable workforce, and continuing to improve and innovate care.

Goals

- Continue to improve patient health outcomes and experiences by delivering timely, high-quality care and connecting patients to alternative services where safe and appropriate.
- Continue to learn, innovate and implement initiatives that improve the delivery of services and support better health outcomes for Victorians.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- AV will work with our health service partners (including through the Timely Emergency Care Collaborative) to implement strategies to improve access to timely pre-hospital care and system-wide patient flow. This will include progressively increasing the use of alternative service pathways in target regions by promoting the use of Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED) and Priority Primary Care Centres and understanding and addressing barriers for using these services, and by using education and guidance to reduce hospital wait times.

- AV will revise and consolidate the Best Care clinical governance framework which encompasses all elements of clinical/patient service delivery including alternative service pathways by March 2024. This ensures that our patient safety climate supports safe, high-quality care and patient experience.
- To ensure AV's response is most appropriately aligned with the patient acuity and resource availability for the management of critical emergencies in the community, AV will:
 - review the changes embedded since the Clinical Response Model evaluation in 2021;
 - consider lessons learnt from the recent ProQA upgrade; and
 - develop the next clinical response model update.
- To strengthen our clinical monitoring and risk management, enhance staff development and training, and ultimately deliver best care for our patients and communities, by June 2024, AV will implement a new framework for Secondary Triage best practice. This will include:
 - strengthened clinical governance;
 - enhanced partnership arrangements with alternate service providers;
 - more patient centred pathways; and
 - stronger mechanisms to facilitate continuous improvement.
- AV will implement the first year of the Cardiac Arrest Improvement Strategy (to drive improvements in patient care and survival rates over the next five years) including:
 - providing enhanced feedback to paramedics;
 - better monitoring of patient outcomes and performance; and
 - actively seeking investment in cardiac arrest research.

Working to achieve long term financial sustainability

Ensure equitable and transparent use of available resources to achieve optimum outcomes.

Goals

- Deliver more impactful and sustainable services to the community through organisational efficiency, digital innovation and environmentally sustainable practices.
- Implement reforms that support financial sustainability.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- AV will review and streamline governance across the organisation including the number of governance committees, and the processes for approvals via delegation to reduce administrative overhead and create efficiencies with our governance processes.
- AV will build a foundational data platform which manages the collection and application of data for business insights and dashboards. This platform is a critical step towards enabling AV's digital strategy which outlines the future direction for a modern digital health service at Ambulance Victoria and the steps we will take to get there. The data platform will ensure the organisation has current, reliable and structured data to inform service delivery, improvement and planning including the modelling of operational scenarios to support decision-making.
- Following the successful trial in 2022-23 to assess the feasibility of devices to replace VACIS tablets (used by Paramedics for completion of Patient Care Records), AV will

complete in field testing of the selected replacement device by June 2024. This pilot will allow AV to assess the viability of the replacement devices and the impact on reducing in-field administrative time so that we can quantify the improvement to response performance and the quality of patient care records. This will inform the business case for the further roll-out of devices.

- AV will complete a Financial Sustainability Improvement Program, with the objective of improving operational efficiency, capability in financial planning and analyses and the annual budgeting and forecasting processes. In 2023-24, this will focus on development of a financial budgeting and forecasting tool, and associated processes, by February 2024, to support development of the 2024-25 budget.

Improving equitable access to healthcare and wellbeing

Ensure that Aboriginal people have access to a health, wellbeing and care system that is holistic, culturally safe, accessible, and empowering.

Ensure that communities in rural and regional areas have equitable health outcomes irrespective of locality.

Goals

- Continue to strengthen Ambulance Victoria's commitment to ensure Aboriginal communities have access to culturally safe and sensitive services.
- Strengthen cultural safety in the delivery of services.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- AV will continue to expand the use of the VVED and increase state-wide utilisation. This will include:
 - promoting utilisation of VVED through AV's Secondary Triage service and via in-field referral from paramedics and other responders for all suitable patients; and
 - ensuring continuous improvement of processes and systems associated with the safe use of virtual care, including providing staff and consumers with appropriate support and communications.
- AV will work with the CFA to develop and implement the Fire Medical Response program. The program is being developed to align with the Emergency Medical Response program and aims to utilise CFA personnel to provide rapid responses and specific treatment to targeted medical emergencies including Priority Zeros.

A stronger workforce

There is increased supply of critical roles, which supports safe, high-quality care. Victoria is a world leader in employee experience, with a focus on future roles, capabilities and professional development. The workforce is regenerative and sustainable, bringing a diversity of skills and experience that reflect the people and communities it serves. As a result of a stronger workforce, Victorians receive the right care at the right time closer to home.

Goals

- Provide a safe, inclusive and well supported working environment where people feel valued, connected and empowered to effectively deliver the best patient-focused pre-hospital care.
- Continue to embed a culture of learning and improvement by building the capability of the workforce, including developing effective leadership.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- AV will develop and implement an Employee Engagement Framework by June 2024 that sets out our goals, measures and approach for communication, engagement and recognition of our employees and volunteers. At the same time, AV will operationalise our AV Values, so that we can improve and evaluate the engagement, trust and job satisfaction of our people. AV will have a particular focus on strategies and initiatives that help build morale and connection across all parts of AV, supporting a safe, fair and inclusive culture.
- By June 2024, AV will develop a clear action plan to support AV to take a long term, intersectional approach to embedding diversity and inclusion in all areas of the organisation.
- AV will deliver a range of initiatives to improve workforce safety in 2023-24 including:
 - improvements to our mental health and well-being support and education;
 - implementation of a suicide prevention model;
 - development of a psychosocial risk framework to improve knowledge of psychosocial hazard exposure and management (by March 2024); and
 - development of a prevention plan to address drivers of workplace harm (by May 2024).
- AV will continue to implement the actions defined in our Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025, ensuring AV makes meaningful and material progress towards organisational gender equality.
- To lead the cultural change in local teams to create a fair, safe and inclusive culture, AV will embed tools such as Upstander Program and reflective practice and build the capability of our frontline leaders through Leadership training and a people leader toolkit.

Connection to patients, partners and the wider healthcare system

Goals

- Form strategic partnerships with key stakeholders to provide high quality services and support improved health outcomes.
- Partner with consumers and their families to improve the design and delivery of ambulance services.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- AV will consult and develop our strategy for engaging with Triple Zero Victoria, our key stakeholder in Operational Communications, so that we are more efficient and effective in progressing joint priorities, managing risks and escalating key issues.
- AV will identify and develop new strategic partnerships to increase the sharing of health messaging from both AV and partner organisations to enhance our reach into communities.
- AV will undertake targeted community education and awareness programs, including Heart Safe Communities, Shocktober and Call Push Shock, so that we empower bystanders to provide CPR and use AEDs with the aim of improving survival from cardiac arrest.
- AV will continue to develop, deliver and lead authentic consumer engagement activities to improve the quality and accessibility of services we provide. This will include building the capability of our community engagement staff through the delivery of public engagement training and rollout of the AV consumer engagement playbook.

Care close to home

Goals

- Continue to innovate and improve alternative care pathways to connect people to the right care where safe and appropriate.
- Increase the capability and confidence of the workforce to effectively access alternative care pathways where safe and appropriate.

Ambulance Victoria deliverables:

- AV will enhance processes and systems including decision support tools, performance monitoring and reporting, and staff and consumer engagement to increase safe utilisation of our embedded alternate care pathways for older persons (RACER), frequent complex callers (patient coordination), and persons experiencing a mental health crisis (TelePROMPT/ TeleHELP).

Part B: Performance Priorities

The *Victorian Health Services Performance Monitoring Framework* outlines the Government's approach to overseeing the performance of Victorian health services.

The Department of Health and Ambulance Victoria will continue to work together to ensure the most appropriate Key Performance Indicators, that best reflect the priorities of the Victorian Government and Ambulance Victoria, are considered for incorporation into the Statement of Priorities. This includes a continuing focus on measures that reflect workplace health, safety and wellbeing and the need to create a positive workplace culture.

Further information is available at the [Funding, Performance and Accountability webpage](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/funding-performance-accountability/performance-monitoring-framework) <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/funding-performance-accountability/performance-monitoring-framework>>.

High quality and safe care:

Key Performance Measure	Target
Infection prevention and control	
Percentage of healthcare workers immunised for influenza	94%
Quality and Safety	
Percentage of respondents who rated care, treatment, advice and /or transport received from the ambulance service as good or very good	95%
Percentage of patients experiencing severe cardiac or traumatic pain whose level of pain was reduced significantly	90%
Percentage of adult stroke patients transported to definitive care within 60 minutes	90%
Percentage of major trauma patients that meet destination compliance	85%
Percentage of adult cardiac arrest patients surviving to hospital	50%
Percentage of adult cardiac arrest patients surviving to hospital discharge	25%
Percentage of respondents who rated care and treatment received from paramedics as good or very good	95%

Strong governance, leadership and culture

Key Performance Measure	Target
Organisational culture	
People matter survey – Percentage of staff with an overall positive response to safety culture survey questions	62%

Timely access to care

Key Performance Measure	Target
Percentage of emergency (Code 1) incidents responded to within 15 minutes	85%
Percentage of emergency (Priority 0) incidents responded to within 13 minutes	85%
Percentage of emergency (Code 1) incidents responded to within 15 minutes in centres with a population greater than 7,500<urban>	90%
Percentage of triple zero cases where the caller receives advice or service from another health provider as an alternative to emergency ambulance response – statewide	15%
Percentage of patients transferred from ambulance to ED within 40 minutes	90%
Average ambulance hospital clearing time	20 minutes

Effective financial management

Key Performance Measure	Target
Operating result (\$M)	(35.71)
Average number of days to pay trade creditors	60 days
Average number of days to receive patient fee debtors	60 days
Adjusted current asset ratio	0.7 or 3% improvement from health service base target
Variance between forecast and actual Net result from transactions (NRFT) for the current financial year ending 30 June.	Variance ≤ \$250,000
Actual number of days of available cash, measured on the last day of each month	14 days

Part C: Activity and Funding

The performance and financial framework within which state government-funded organisations operate is described in *The Policy and Funding Guidelines – Funding Rules*. The Funding Rules details funding and pricing arrangements and provides modelled budgets and targets for a range of programs. The [Policy and Funding Guidelines](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/policy-and-funding-guidelines-for-health-services) webpage <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/policy-and-funding-guidelines-for-health-services>>.

Period 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

Table 1 Ambulance Victoria funding summary for 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

Funding Type	Activity	Budget (\$'000)
Community Service Obligation emergency road and air transport		
Emergency Services	283,266	
Non-emergency Services	230 376	
Statewide air transports		
Emergency Services	4,030	
Non-emergency Services	3,333	
Statewide road transports		
Emergency Services	518,329	
Non-emergency Services	309 922	
Treatment without transport		
Emergency Services	119,877	

Funding Type	Activity	Budget (\$'000)
Community Service Obligation - Emergency Transport		695,649
Community Service Obligation - Non Emergency Transport		133,799
Government Initiatives and other specified funding		235,130
Supplementation funding		8,579
Total Funding		1,073,157

Please note:

- Base level funding, related services and activity levels, outlined within the Policy and Funding Guidelines are subject to change throughout the year. Further information about the department's approach to funding and price setting for specific clinical activities, and funding policy changes is also available from: [Policy and funding guidelines for health services](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/policy-and-funding-guidelines-for-health-services) <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/policy-and-funding-guidelines-for-health-services>>

- Each funding type row (eg “emergency services”) comprises a mix of activity based funding and block grants. Funding depends on the service profile. For further details, refer to the Policy and funding guidelines for health services (see above point for link).
- In situations where a change is required to Part C, changes to the agreement will be actioned through an exchange of letters between the department and the health service’s Chief Executive Officer.

Accountability and funding requirements

The health service must comply with:

- All laws applicable to it;
- The *National Health Reform Agreement*.
- All applicable requirements, policies, terms or conditions of funding specified or referred to in the Department of Health *Policy and Funding Guidelines 2023-24*.
- Policies and procedures and appropriate internal controls to ensure accurate and timely submission of data to the Department of Health.
- All applicable policies and guidelines issued by the Department of Health from time to time and notified to the health service.
- Where applicable, all terms and conditions specified in an agreement between the health service and the Department of Health relating to the provision of health services which is in force at any time during the 2023-24 financial year.
- Relevant standards for programs which have been adopted e.g. International Organisation for Standardisation standards and AS/NZS 4801:2001, Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems or an equivalent standard.
- Where applicable, this includes the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards ('NSQHS standards') as accredited through the Australian Health Service Safety and Quality Accreditation Scheme.
- Specific to DHSV: in relation to the School Dental Project Plan, as agreed and specified by both parties, including meeting the requirements outlined in the School Licence Agreement.
- Any other relevant, applicable statutory, regulatory or accountability rules, policies, plans, procedures or publications.

Signing Page

The Minister for Ambulance Services has issued this Statement of Priorities to detail the funding provided to enable Ambulance Victoria to meet its service obligations and performance requirements as outlined.



Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Ambulance Services

Date: 6/5/2024