

Statement of Priorities 2023-24 for Dental Health Services Victoria

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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.

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Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

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2206-7531 (online/PDF/Word)

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>>.

Dental Health Services Victoria will contribute to the Strategic Plan 2023-27 by agreeing to the following priorities:

Ministerial Priorities

1. Improved health system culture, grounded in respect and safety.
2. A supported, growing, and fit-for-purpose health workforce.
3. A reformed overall health system (community-based and acute health services), with reforms to service models and enablers (structural, financial and cultural), delivering improved patient safety, experiences and outcomes, particularly for people in regional and rural Victoria.
4. A step-change in women's health.
5. Nation-leading reductions in rates of vaping.
6. Improved health equity through:
 - determination and ceding power.
 - Family-centred health models for priority populations.
 - Intersectional improvements in health access and outcomes for priority cohorts.
7. Improved mental health system through:
 - New and transformed integrated services through the implementation of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.
 - Strengthening system guidance, stewardship and commissioning.
 - Realising the vision of the new Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022 by driving cultural change.
 - Supporting a culture that embraces lived experience leadership at every level of the mental health and wellbeing system.
 - Investing in suicide prevention and mental health and wellbeing promotion.

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

- Develop strong and effective relationships with consumer and clinical partners to drive service improvements.
- Reduce low value care and duplication to achieve better outcomes for people and improved safety and quality.

DHSV deliverables:

- Work with Community Dental Agencies to improve service delivery models utilising the principles of value-based health care.

- Continue the implementation of the value-based health care framework in the Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne (RDHM).
- In collaboration with the department, continue to reduce low value care through the ongoing review of item codes to incentivise prevention and early intervention, and decrease funding for low value care.
- In collaboration with the Department of Justice, implement a model of care, including appropriate referral pathways to deliver emergency and specialist services to youth and adults within the justice system.

Working to achieve long term financial sustainability

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

Goals

- Development of a health service financial sustainability plan in partnership with the department, with a goal to achieving long term health service safety and sustainability.
- Co-operate with, and support department-led reforms, that look towards reducing waste and improving efficiency to address financial sustainability, operational and safety performance, and system management.

DHSV deliverables:

- Continue the implementation of the Beacon on the Hill Strategy to improve efficiency, performance and financial sustainability of the RDHM.
- In collaboration with the department, contribute to National Dental Reform, including input to the development of funding frameworks, outcomes measures and funding models that support a shift to value-based healthcare to achieve system wide funding reform.
- Ongoing development and implementation of the strategy to increase the utilisation of the Child Dental Benefits Schedule to optimise all available funding sources and increase service capacity across the sector.

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

- Strengthen programs that support Aboriginal people to access early intervention and prevention services.
- Enhance the provision of appropriate and culturally safe services, programs and clinical trials for and as determined by Aboriginal people, embedding the principles of self-determination.
- Address service access issues and equity of health outcomes for rural and regional people including more support for primary, community, home-based and virtual care services.

DHSV deliverables:

- Continue the rollout of Smile Squad and specialised services to support rural and regional Victoria to access oral health care. This includes implementing the change to delivery of Smile Squad to government secondary schools from annual to biennial, commencing from term 1 2024.
- Develop and implement a second Reconciliation Action Plan.
- In partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO), complete the development of the statewide model of care for Aboriginal people to improve oral health outcomes through a focus on prevention, early intervention and system enhancement.
- Continue roll out of Aboriginal Health Practitioner-led Fluoride Varnish program in participating Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs).
- Support the outcomes of the Smile Squad Refugee Advisory Group to improve access to oral health care for these communities.

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

- Improve employee experience across four initial focus areas to assure safe, high-quality care: leadership, health and safety, flexibility, and career development and agility.
- Explore new and contemporary models of care and practice, including future roles and capabilities.

DHSV deliverables:

- Develop and commence the implementation of the Workforce Culture and Engagement Strategy 2024 – 2027.
- Continue the implementation of DHSV's state-wide workforce strategy.
- Develop and commence implementation of a new service model for the delivery of clinical placements across the sector.
- Oversee and deliver actions as part of the Smile Squad Accelerated Delivery Action Plan (ADAP).
- Continue the delivery of the Dental Assisting Traineeship Initiative (DATI).

Moving from competition to collaboration

Share knowledge, information and resources with partner health and wellbeing services and care providers. This will allow patients to experience one health, wellbeing and care system through connected digital health information, evidence and data flows, enabled by advanced interoperable platforms.

Goals

- Partner with other organisations (for example community health, ACCHOs, PHNs, General Practice, private health) to drive further collaboration and build a more integrated system.
- Engage in integrated planning and service design approaches, whilst assuring consistent and strong clinical governance, with partners to join up the system to deliver seamless and sustainable care pathways and build sector collaboration.

DHSV deliverables:

- Maintain active collaboration with VACCHO in line with the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Partner with Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Organisations with community dental services to achieve and sustain better oral health outcomes and deliver culturally appropriate oral health promotion resources.
- Continue implementation of the Oral Cancer Screening and Prevention Program, including the roll-out of oral cancer education and training for non-oral health professionals, such as general practitioners.
- Partner with the Australian Dental Association Victoria Branch and private providers to increase oral health capacity to support the care of our eligible clients.
- Partner with Victorian universities on oral health research that can contribute to improved oral health outcomes for Victorians.

Empowering people to keep healthy and safe in the community

Support individual health and mental wellbeing by giving people the tools and information they need to stay healthy and well. Work with the local government to respond to health threats and empower the community to proactively respond to health risks.

Goals

- Collaborate with local organisations and communities to better understand local health priorities and deliver collective and collaborative preventative health, mental health and wellbeing services and programs, where all people, sectors and communities have an important role to play in enabling people to live their best lives.
- Improve the health and wellbeing of our communities, families and individuals by focussing on areas of healthy eating, climate change impacts, increased physical activity, and reduced rates of harmful drug, alcohol and substance behaviours including vaping.
- Enhance health literacy and promote high-quality health information so that the local community, including those in priority cohorts, can apply this knowledge to their own circumstances.

DHSV deliverables:

- Increase the reach of capacity building initiatives to non-oral health professionals to promote oral health in their communities through programs like Healthy Families Healthy Smiles.
- Increase the reach of the Smiles for Miles Program to high-risk kindergartens.
- Support the implementation of the Victorian Action Plan to Prevent Oral Disease 2020-30.
- Continue DHSV's campaign to reduce the rates of vaping, particularly in school aged children.

Care close to home

Primary and community care is accessible and reduces avoidable escalation in acuity of health conditions. When appropriate, hospital care is delivered in the home, including through digital care and connection, to deliver virtual care, telehealth, and other advanced models of care.

Goals

- Improve pathways through the health system and implement models of care to enable more people to access care closer to, or in their homes.
- Identify and develop clinical service models of care that can be delivered via virtual care (videocall, telehealth, remote monitoring) where safe and appropriate to enable care closer to home.

DHSV deliverables:

- Work with Community Dental Agencies to ensure delivery of Statement of Priority targets and Smile Squad services.
- Further enhance DHSV's Tele-dentistry model to support community dental agencies, Smile Squad and State-wide Specialised Services.
- Implement three regional Smile Squad specialised services hubs to deliver on the Specialised Services Strategy initiative.

Part B: Performance Priorities

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

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	
Compliance with the Hand Hygiene Australia program ¹	85%
Percentage of healthcare workers immunised for influenza	94%
Patient experience	
Patient satisfaction at the Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne, as measured by the Patient Reported Experience Measure Survey (PREMS)	85% positive experience

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	0.62

¹ Effective date of target change from 85% to 80% conditional on pending changes to BP3 requirements.

Timely access to care

Key performance measure	2023-24 Agencies Target	2023-24 RDHM Target	2023-24 Statewide Target
Emergency care			
Percentage of Dental Emergency Triage Category 1 clients treated within 24 hours	90%	90%	90%
Percentage of Dental Emergency Triage Category 2 clients treated within 7 days	80%	80%	80%
Percentage of Dental Emergency Triage Category 3 clients treated within 14 days	75%	75%	75%
General and denture care			
Number of hospital initiated postponements per 100 scheduled appointments.		3	
Waiting time for prosthodontics, endodontic, and orthodontics specialist services patients (months)		15	
Waiting time for other dental specialist services patients (months)		9	
Waiting time for general care (months)			23
Waiting time for denture care (months)			22
Waiting time for priority denture care (months)			3
Activity			
Total number of individuals treated ^{2,3}			365,000
Priority and emergency clients treated ^{3,4}			273,800
Dental Weighted Activity Units (DWAUs) ^{3,4}			351,488

Oral health promotion

Key performance measure	Target
Children participating in Smiles 4 Miles	50,000

² Targets reflect additional activity to be delivered under the *Federation Funding Agreement – Schedule on Public Dental Services for Adults*.

³ Targets exclude services provided via the *Child Dental Benefits Schedule*.

School Dental Program

Key performance measure	Target
Schools visited by Smile Squad (annual by December) ⁵	200
Students examined by Smile Squad (annual by December) ⁵	50,000
Students receiving treatment by Smile Squad (annual by December) ⁴	7,500

Effective financial management

Key Performance Measure	Target
Operating result (\$M)	0.00
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

⁴ School Dental Program targets align with Budget Paper No. 3 *Service Delivery*. Additional negotiated deliverables are in accordance with agreed arrangements.

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 Dental Health Services Victoria funding summary for 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

Funding Type	Activity	Budget (\$'000)	Measure and Target 2023-24
Oral Cancer Screening & Preventions Program	16,454	288,200	Implement negotiated deliverables
Service System Resourcing and Development ⁵	27,010	12,509,338	Reported in Annual Report
Annual Provisions/Minor Works	27,011	1,095,438	Reported in Annual Report
Oral Health Promotion	27,017	2,192,119	Implement negotiated deliverables
RDHM Dental Care	27,019	31,378,076	Individuals treated/DWAU
Workforce, Resourcing and Development	27,020	2,353,731	Report on implementation of DHSV Workforce Strategy
Community Dental Care	27,023	124,476,101	Individuals treated/DWAU
TOTAL		174,293,004*	

*Note that the modelled budget provided separately includes an additional \$20.489m which was cashflowed in January 2024. This amount represents the first payment against the Smile Squad funding allocation in the table below.

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](#)

⁵ Includes funding under the following activities and activity numbers: Acute activity – Admitted Patients (11008); Dental Services Purchasing (27024); Clinical Leadership and Governance (27025); Capital Planning and Development (27026); Regional Service System Support (27028); Data Management and IT (27029).

[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.

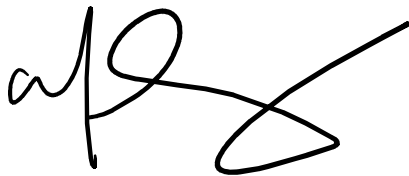
Accountability and funding requirements

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



Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Minister for Health

Date: 6/5/2024