

Media Release

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



Tuesday, 2 April 2024

FREE SPECIALIST WOMEN'S HEALTH CLINICS ON THE WAY

More Victorian women will soon have access to free and comprehensive care and support under the one roof, with five of the Allan Labor Government's Women's Health Clinics opening across Victoria from June.

Premier Jacinta Allan and Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today officially announced the first five of 20 comprehensive women's health clinics will open at the Northern Hospital, Royal Women's Hospital, Frankston Hospital, Barwon Health Geelong and Ballarat Base Hospital.

The clinics will remove the barriers women face when trying to access specialist care and deliver more services closer to home.

Services will be delivered by hardworking gynecologists, urologists, specialist nursing and allied health support under the one roof, making it easier for women to access specialist care for conditions including endometriosis, pelvic pain, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), perimenopause and menopause.

Both the Royal Women's Hospital and Barwon Health have existing women's health clinics, which will now extend services to five days a week following this investment. The three other locations will establish new clinics.

Part of the Labor Government's landmark \$153 million women's health package, five clinics will open every year over the next four years across Victoria – including a culturally safe Aboriginal-led clinic and a mobile Women's Health Clinic which will visit remote parts of the state.

The announcement coincides with the opening of the *Women's Pain Survey*, which is seeking the views of women and girls who have experiences with pain and accessing related services.

Seeking a wide range of views, the survey is also calling on clinicians and healthcare workers to help identify areas where the health system and services can be improved.

The findings will contribute to the ongoing *Inquiry into Women's Pain*, adding to the insights from Victoria's recent nation-leading health report, *Listening to Women's Voices*. This confirmed what women already know: their health and pain are real and regularly overlooked, with 40 per cent of Victorian women living with chronic pain.

Victoria has a proud track record of working to improve women's health outcomes – from establishing Victoria's first clinic for women's heart health, delivering 11 sexual and reproductive health hubs, and launching the state's first ever sexual and reproductive health phone line.

The *Women's Pain Survey* is now open at engage.vic.gov.au/inquiry-into-womens-pain-survey

Quote attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"Victoria is leading the way – first by listening to women and what they experience, and then by delivering the care and services they need."

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"We are transforming the way women's health is treated in Victoria – these new clinics will make a huge difference, delivering affordable and comprehensive healthcare for every woman, no matter her postcode."

Media contact: Lily King 0499 791 387 | lily.king@minstaff.vic.gov.au

Quote attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Women's Health Kat Theophanous

"Having spent a lot of time speaking with women about their experience with pain, it is clear we need to make care more accessible – that is exactly what these clinics will do, especially the mobile clinic for remote areas of the state."

Quote attributable to Member for Mill Park Lily D'Ambrosio

"With the new clinic at the Northern Hospital, women across our community will soon be able to access the specialist care they need, closer to home."

Quote attributable to Member for Thomastown Bronwyn Halfpenny

"This will be a safe and affordable method of care for countless women in the northern suburbs – I am proud that this new service that is right on our doorstep will be one of the first to open."