

# Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP  
Leader of the House  
Minister for Health  
Minister for Health Infrastructure  
Minister for Ambulance Services



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## ONE YEAR OF FAIRER AND MORE AFFORDABLE FERTILITY CARE

The Allan Labor Government is celebrating one year of fairer and affordable public fertility care in Victoria - with more than 1,100 people having now taken up the chance to start the family they want.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today visited the Royal Women's Hospital (RWH) to mark the milestone and announce the first baby has been born thanks to the Australian-first program.

The Labor Government has invested \$120 million to deliver the landmark program which is set to enable up to 5,000 Victorians every year access these services – delivering up to 3,375 treatment cycles - helping them save up to \$10,000.

Excitingly, this dream has already become a reality for one family, with Victoria's first baby conceived through the public fertility program arriving safely last month – little Felix, a healthy baby boy who was welcomed into the world on 17 October by parents Erin and Anthony.

Through the program 21 Victorians have become pregnant so far with patients accessing a range of treatments including in vitro fertilisation (IVF), intrauterine insemination (IUI) or Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection (ICSI).

Other services available through the program include fertility preservation, such as egg freezing for people undergoing medical treatment for illnesses that may compromise their fertility, such as cancer.

Delivered in partnership with the Royal Women's Hospital and Monash Health, a number of partner sites are also progressively opening across the state - including in regional Victoria, ensuring more people can access fertility care closer to home and helping hopeful parents cut down on unnecessary travel time and other indirect expenses.

Clinics are up and running in Epping, Mildura, Bendigo and Warrnambool with further sites set to open in Shepparton, Heidelberg, Geelong, Sunshine and Ballarat by the end of 2023.

Australia's first public egg and sperm bank was also launched in July. Initial interest from new potential donors has been strong, with the Royal Women's Hospital currently accepting egg and sperm donations from the Victorian community.

More information visit [betterhealth.vic.gov.au/services-support/public-fertility-care-services](https://betterhealth.vic.gov.au/services-support/public-fertility-care-services).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

*"Since launching Victoria's first public fertility care service last year, more than a thousand Victorian families are one step closer to achieving their dreams of having a child."*

*"For too long and for too many, treatments like IVF have been financially out of reach – it's why we've invested in this Australian-first program to ensure more affordable and more accessible fertility care for all Victorians."*

### Quote attributable to the Royal Women's Hospital Head of Reproductive Services Associate Professor Kate Stern

*"I'm very proud of our highly specialised team providing this world-class service so more Victorians have the chance to become parents, and I think it's so brave for people to take the first step and have the conversation about their fertility and find out what can be done to help."*

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**Quote attributable to the Monash Health Deputy Chief Operating Officer Andrea Rindt**

*“The team at Monash Health and Monash Women’s are thrilled for Erin and Anthony, and for the opportunity to assist them conceive Felix, a healthy baby boy – the first baby born as a result of Victoria’s public fertility service.”*

*“As the largest maternity service in Victoria, delivering over 11,000 babies per year, it’s been wonderful to expand our service through the public program, supporting couples like Erin and Anthony welcome a new addition to their family.”*