

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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10,000 SUPPORTED AS PHARMACY PILOT PASSES HALFWAY MARK

More than 10,000 consultations have been delivered as part of the Allan Labor Government's Community Pharmacist Statewide Pilot – ensuring Victorians are getting the basic care they need, without having to wait to get an appointment with a busy local doctor.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas today visited Lim's Pharmacy in Springvale – one of 766 participating pharmacies across the state – to hear firsthand how the pilot is helping locals as it passes the halfway mark.

Women are benefitting the most from this fast and affordable everyday healthcare – with more than 5,290 consultations delivered for the treatment of an uncomplicated urinary tract infection and 3,160 for a resupply of the oral contraceptive pill.

Additionally, more than 2,200 Victorians have been able to easily access travel health and other vaccines. Treatment for shingles and flare ups of mild plaque psoriasis were added to the pilot in February this year.

The pilot is making it easier for people outside of Melbourne to seek the care or advice they need, with 27 per cent of participating pharmacies and more than 20 per cent of total consultations delivered in regional Victoria.

With five months left of the pilot, eligible pharmacies are still able to join the pilot with no cap on the number of pharmacies that can join.

Backed by a \$20 million investment – the pilot is making it easier for people to access care without having to repeatedly visit a GP, helping to free up appointments for those who need them and give more viable alternatives than delaying care, going to an emergency department or calling Triple Zero.

It is a clear winner with Victorians – 97 per cent reporting they are satisfied with the service they received and most stating they did not need to seek further healthcare.

The 12-month pilot is guided by experts and clinical groups representing the pharmacy and medical professions – at its conclusion, the pilot will be evaluated, and any recommendations will inform longer-term decision making.

The pilot is just one in a suite of initiatives the Labor Government is undertaking to improve access to timely care, including establishing 29 Priority Primary Care Centres and the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department.

More information is available at betterhealth.vic.gov.au/services-support/community-pharmacist-pilot.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"Our Community Pharmacist Statewide Pilot is making accessing everyday healthcare easier by providing Victorians with more treatment options closer to home."

"Women are overwhelmingly reaping the benefits of this pilot, transforming what has previously been a difficult process to access basic UTI care or a quick pill prescription, into a simple and cost effective one."

Quote attributable to Member for Mulgrave Eden Foster

"Alongside our other initiatives to reduce demand on our hospitals, this pilot is making it easier and cheaper for locals in Mulgrave, Springvale and Noble Park to get the care they need."

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