

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Leader of the House
Minister for Health
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AUSTRALIA'S FIRST PARAMEDIC PRACTITIONER LAWS PASS PARLIAMENT

Legislation to enshrine Australia's first Paramedic Practitioner into law has now passed the Victorian Parliament, paving the way for them to deliver urgent care and prescribe medicines while saving Victorians a trip to hospital.

The Allan Labor Government's *Paramedic Practitioners Bill 2024* fulfils a 2022 election commitment, making Victoria the first jurisdiction in Australia to have dedicated legislation to support this role – allowing the delivery of a higher level of care to patients when and where they need it.

Paramedics regularly transfer patients with serious, but not life-threatening, conditions to hospitals. With their new advanced clinical training, Paramedic Practitioners will now be able to assess, diagnose and treat patients in the field, make clinical decisions and take pressure off our busy emergency departments.

The key change will allow Paramedic Practitioners to prescribe and administer scheduled medicines when treating patients, providing Victorians with immediate treatment on the spot.

The first cohort of 30 paramedics is currently progressing through Monash University's nation-leading Paramedic Practitioner master's degree, with a second cohort set to begin in the coming weeks.

Developed in collaboration and consultation with Ambulance Victoria, Safer Care Victoria, paramedics, clinicians and unions, the free master's degree will see these graduates deployed to regional Victoria in 2026.

Once graduated, the Paramedic Practitioners will be equipped to treat conditions that often lead to hospital visits, such as urinary catheter care, wound care and closure, minor infections, dislocations and fractures.

The specialised role was made possible by a \$20 million investment in *Victorian Budget 2023/24*, with the master's degree open to eligible paramedics employed by Ambulance Victoria with more than five years' experience.

The Labor Government's investments into ambulance services are more important than ever, with the latest quarterly data revealing Victoria's paramedics continue to face high demand, attending close to 100,000 Code 1 call outs.

The Government is also supporting the training of 40 additional Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance (MICA) paramedics, that will see Ambulance Victoria welcome their largest cohort of MICA trainees in history.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"The passing of this nation-leading legislation means our Paramedic Practitioners are one step closer to hitting the road, providing urgent care to Victorians and saving them an unnecessary trip to our busy emergency departments."

"We listened to our paramedic workforce who told us Australia's first Paramedic Practitioners will make a huge difference to regional Victoria – delivering urgent care and reducing demand on our regional hospitals."