

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Health

Minister for Ambulance Services



Monday, 24 March 2025

VICTORIA HOME TO WORLD-LEADING CARDIAC ARREST SURVIVAL RATES

Annual data has once again highlighted Victoria as having the best cardiac survival rates in Australia and among the best in the world, with more Victorians than ever before using CPR skills to save lives.

Minister for Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas has revealed new data from the *Victorian Ambulance Cardiac Arrest Registry (VACAR) Annual Report 2023/24* showing Victoria's highest ever cardiac arrest survival rate of 41 per cent – up five per cent from last year – for cases where a bystander witnessed a cardiac arrest and the patient presented in a shockable rhythm.

The 41 per cent survival rate means Victoria ranked first in Australia and third internationally in 2023/24 on the *Utstein Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest Registry* for international cardiac arrest reporting.

A record 141 Victorians received treatment from a bystander using CPR and a public Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) while awaiting emergency care from paramedics – with a remarkable 47 per cent surviving, compared to only a 32 per cent survival rate when there is no bystander intervention.

Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest is a leading cause of death in Australia affecting over 30,000 Australians yearly, with survival dropping 10 per cent per minute without treatment – making bystander CPR and AED access critical.

Victoria has more than 7,500 publicly accessible defibrillators, significantly improving the survival rates for cardiac arrest patients, who without CPR or AED intervention have only a 5-10% chance of survival.

Ambulance Victoria's free GoodSAM app is also making a difference with 17,327 registered responders and 793 cases attended by volunteers in the last year. Integrated with Triple Zero, the app connects patients with registered volunteers who can provide CPR and defibrillation until an ambulance arrives.

Responding to the impact of increasing cardiac arrests, Ambulance Victoria's *2023-2028 Cardiac Arrest Improvement Strategy* outlines its work to roll out community-based education and participation programs for both adults and children, including learning CPR and how to use an AED.

It comes as the latest quarterly performance data revealed Victoria's hardworking paramedics continue to face record demand, responding to nearly 100,000 Code 1 cases this quarter – an increase of 3,000 from last year.

The Allan Labor Government has always backed Victoria's dedicated paramedics, investing more than \$2 billion into ambulance services since coming to office in 2014, and this funding has grown each year.

This includes recruiting more than 2,200 additional paramedics, the delivery of 46 new or upgraded ambulance stations with another 5 on the way, getting Australia's first paramedic practitioners on the road, and training and recruiting 40 additional MICA paramedics.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ambulance Services Mary-Anne Thomas

"We have the best cardiac arrest survival rate in Australia and among the highest in the world – it is incredible to see Victorians going out of their way to help others in need, saving lives and getting them home to their families."

"Minutes matter in cardiac arrests and when a patient receives CPR and defibrillation before paramedics arrive, their chance of survival increases significantly."

Media contact: Max Resic 0435 256 250 | max.resic@minstaff.vic.gov.au