Victorian Health Collective

16 June 2026

Victorian Health Collective calls on parties to commit to strengthening healthcare system

As Victoria approaches the 2026 State Election, leading voices from across Victoria's health and wellbeing sectors have come together, calling for all parties and candidates to commit to strengthening the state's healthcare system.

The Victorian Health Collective is a collaboration between key Victorian peak bodies and organisations, representing a broad spectrum of health and wellbeing services.

Across six key priority areas, the group has developed forward-thinking solutions that would give more Victorians access to critical healthcare services, and support the state's health system to innovate and remain sustainable into the future.

Healthcare currently represents around one-third of the Victorian State Budget, with over $30 billion invested in 2026-27. This year's budget had a focus on building and maintaining investment across some key areas of the health system.

Health must remain a focus across the next term of government. New investment and policy solutions must be backed by evidence and targeted to the right places, to drive innovation. This will ensure high-quality care is accessible, delivered close to home and responsive to individual and community need. Workforce shortages and increasing demand for care are long standing challenges for the sector that must be prioritised.

Ahead of the Victorian State Election in November, the Victorian Health Collective is calling for all parties and candidates to commit to the following priorities:

1. Invest in equitable access to high-quality, culturally safe care:
2. Strengthen integration and navigation across the healthcare and social services landscape
3. Support a strong, skilled, diverse and sustainable workforce
4. Invest heavily in prevention, early intervention, recovery and action to address the social determinants of health
5. Reorient funding approaches to recognise the true cost of delivering high-quality care
6. Build, expand and maintain healthcare facilities that meet community need.

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Victorian Health Collective

Victorian Health Collective members

Association of Australian Medical Research Institutes Victorian Chapter (AAMRI VIC)

Alliance of Rural and Regional Community Health

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Mental Health Victoria

Multicultural Centre for Women's Health

Municipal Association of Victoria

Palliative Care Victoria

Rural Workforce Agency Victoria

Sexual Health Victoria

Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO)

Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA)

Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS)

Victorian Healthcare Association

Women's Health Victoria

Victorian Health Collective

Election Priorities

1. **Invest in equitable access to high-quality, culturally safe care:** Resource healthcare services to reduce health inequities, align services with demand, and ensure that evidence-based, high-quality care is available to everyone, regardless of their location, identity, income and life circumstances. Investment must enable delivery on committed reforms.
2. **Strengthen integration and navigation across the healthcare and social services landscape:** Strengthen the connections between acute, primary and community-based services, making care easier to navigate, when and where people need it. Upgraded and expanded digital infrastructure will improve health information-sharing and reduce delays and client transitions between services. Stronger linkages across service streams, and improvements to referral pathways and discharge systems, will enable a better client journey back to the community after an episode of acute care.
3. **Support a strong, skilled, diverse and sustainable workforce:** Enhance the workforce to meet growing demand for a diverse mix of care. Enable the workforce to work to their full scope and enable specialist expertise to respond to increasingly complex care needs. Workforce attraction and retention policies must be embedded to support areas of greater workforce demand and growth needs. Workforce initiatives should be targeted to support a workforce that reflects the diverse communities it serves.
4. **Invest heavily in prevention, early intervention, recovery and action to address the social determinants of health:** Prioritise prevention, early intervention, recovery and action on the social determinants of health, to drive health service system efficiencies and strong and effective pathways to long-lasting health and wellbeing for individuals and the community.
5. **Reorient funding approaches to recognise the true cost of delivering high-quality care:** Amend funding arrangements to account for the cost of inflation, indirect health-related costs, strengthening of culturally safe care, medical research and strategic cross-sector collaboration, which are often not covered by traditional funding models.
6. **Build, expand and maintain healthcare facilities that meet community need:** Enable the delivery of infrastructure that provides the foundation for an effective and sustainable healthcare system. Healthcare facilities must meet the needs of growing populations with increasingly complex and healthcare needs. Both new and upgraded healthcare facilities should be easy to access, welcoming, culturally safe and private, supported by digital infrastructure that enables connectivity to telehealth/virtual models of care.