



MEDIA RELEASE

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VICTORIAN PRIVATE HOSPITALS MOBILISED TO FIGHT COVID-19 AS PART OF NATIONAL AGREEMENT

Key players in the private hospital sector have welcomed the first state partnership with the Victorian government that ensures vital care is available to Victorians in the fight against COVID-19.

It will mean private hospitals provide maximum, timely and optimal support to the Victorian government and the Victorian community during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Victoria is the first state to sign up to the national partnership between the Commonwealth, States and Territories and the private and not-for-profit sector that was announced on Tuesday by Health Minister Greg Hunt. The partnership will see 30,000 hospital beds, and the sector's 105,000 skilled workforce work alongside public hospitals across Australia.

The Australian Private Hospitals Association (APHA) and Catholic Health Australia (CHA) have welcomed the deal and congratulated the Victorian government for achieving this in a short timeframe.

Private hospital facilities will provide hospital capacity and services including acute care beds, facilities, diagnostics, staffing, management and full organisation capability to the Victorian government. The deal represents around 8,500 beds and 28,000 staff across the State, to be available from today.

The deal includes hospitals owned and operated by Ramsay Health Care, Epworth HealthCare, Healthscope, St John of God Healthcare, St Vincent's Health Australia, Cabrini Health and Healthe Care. Under the terms of the deal, the private sector will be reimbursed at cost.

APHA CEO Michael Roff said it was important that the private hospital sector could assist at this critical time.

"These facilities around the State will be urgently mobilised to assist the State government to manage the impact of COVID-19. I encourage other States and Territories to urgently follow Victoria's lead to ensure all Australians have access to private hospital care in this crisis."

“While we face the unknown in terms of the extent of the impact of this virus, it is vital that all health providers work together, as one health system, to deliver the best care and treatment to patients within our communities.

“Our teams are willing to do whatever we can to support the state in this time of need. Victorian private hospitals will ensure we are ready with working arrangements in place. We already have strict infection control and prevention protocols in place to protect our staff and healthcare workers and we have access to global supply chains.

“We are pleased that private hospitals are able to be of assistance to work with governments at the frontline to fight against COVID-19.”

CHA CEO Pat Garcia said: “I commend the Victorian government for acting so quickly. Private hospitals can now turn their attention to preparing clinical and non-clinical staff, to treat COVID-19 patients. However, we need to see a national agreement in place sooner rather than later. It’s our hope that we can see all private acute hospitals deployed to fight the pandemic.

“The Victorian model is a good model and one that other states should consider adopting urgently.”

Media contacts: Frith Rayner 0413 971 999 (APHA) and Julian Lee 0422 343 086 (CHA)