



## Frequently Asked Questions

### SERVICES

**Q: What is Eastern Health 2022?**

**A:** This is the *Eastern Health Strategic Clinical Service Plan 2012-2022*. It is based on demographic data, predicted health needs of the local community, government policy and the views of key stakeholders including staff and local community members and groups.

It recommends a future health services profile so that services can be aligned to meet the community's needs and improve equity of access to health services during the next 10 years. The Plan's primary purpose is to act as a guide for future decisions and it will be adapted to address emerging issues or changing needs. You can find a full copy of the plan on our website via this link: <https://www.easternhealth.org.au/site/item/480-eastern-health-2022-the-strategic-clinical-service-plan>

**Q: What services will be included?**

**A:** The service profile and service model for the Healesville & District Hospital and Yarra Valley Community Health site is based on the best evidence that is available and has now been finalised. It includes:

- A maternity model that provides antenatal and postnatal midwifery care in the Healesville area, bringing services closer to where mothers live
- Continuing acute, inpatient care, particularly for older patients, consistent with the ageing of the population
- Continuing to provide endoscopy and low-complexity surgery
- Introducing a renal dialysis service
- Expanding and improving facilities for community health services
- Expanding and improving access to specialist (outpatient) clinics
- Increasing palliative care and mental health services
- Improving the rooms for inpatients so they are more private by reducing the number of shared rooms and providing ensuite access.

**Q: Why are there no birthing services?**

**A:** Eastern Health made a decision to provide birthing at Angliss and Box Hill hospitals due to the decreased demand for birthing at Healesville & District Hospital and workforce availability – and ultimately, ensuring Eastern Health continues to provide a safe, high-quality service at Healesville. If the needs of the community change and GP obstetricians and midwives are available, we will review this decision. There will be provision in the newly-refurbished hospital for a birthing suite in the future.

We have introduced a new maternity model that provides antenatal and postnatal midwifery care in the Healesville area, bringing services closer to where mothers live.

**Q: Will birthing services ever return to the hospital?**

**A:** Space for a birthing room and ensuite will be included as part of the redevelopment. This will allow Eastern Health to introduce birthing services at the hospital when and if demand increases across the Yarra Ranges, and Eastern Health is able to provide a safe, high-quality birthing service.

**Q: How will you determine the increased demand?**

**A:** Eastern Health will use Australian Bureau of Statistics census data and data from the metropolitan health plan to assess demand for birthing services. We will also work with our local GP network to determine demand for birthing services at Healesville & District Hospital.

**Q: What about the data that suggests there has been an increase in births in the area?**

**A:** The reported 24 per cent increase in births is a grossly misleading statement when taken on its own. This is not the data used for planning healthcare and is not consistent with the Victorian Government's health forecasting dataset.

**Q: Does the hospital offer maternity services?**

**A:** Healesville & District Hospital and Yarra Valley Community Health offer a range of maternity services for people living in the Yarra Ranges. This includes supportive maternity services, such as antenatal clinics and midwifery care, as well as a range of community care options during and post-pregnancy. Eastern Health provides birthing services at Angliss and Box Hill hospitals. Women with uncomplicated pregnancies can use Eastern Health's antenatal clinic at Healesville & District Hospital from 20 to 40 weeks of their pregnancy. However, women with more complicated pregnancies would access antenatal clinics at another Eastern Health hospital. This means that women have access to services close to home for regular, antenatal appointments during pregnancy and following the birth of their baby. Eastern Health also offers pregnancy and post-natal exercise classes, a Mums Day Out program for women to receive health information and take some time out, support programs for vulnerable pregnant women, allied health services for babies and children, supported playgroups and counselling services in the Yarra Ranges.

**Q: Is it possible to include all health services at Healesville?**

**A:** Eastern Health has a responsibility to provide the community with the right care, in the right place, at the right time. We also manage this within a budget, which is funded by you, the taxpayer. It is therefore very important that we utilise all our services to their full potential and live within our means to achieve the best outcomes for everyone. While we know we can't offer every service at every site, we can distribute our clinical services to best meet the needs of the local community. All Victorian public health services are governed by the *Health Services Act 1988*. Part of the Act states that one of the functions of the board of a public health service is " ... to establish and maintain effective systems to ensure that the health services provided meet the needs of the communities served by the public health service ..."

**Q: How many consulting rooms will be provided and how will this aspect of the service model function?**

**A:** A total of 17 consulting rooms, including two specialist paediatric consulting rooms, will be available following the completion of the redevelopment. The majority of the additional rooms will be treatment spaces where patients will see our clinical staff including, for example, general practitioners, nurses and the podiatrist. Other rooms will be set up as consulting suites for specialist clinic patient appointments with consulting medical staff (commonly referred to as outpatients). These rooms will also be used by social workers,

dietitians, speech pathologists and other members of the clinical team. These additional rooms will enable an enhanced and expanded range of services to be delivered to the community.

**Q: Will the GP service continue and how will it be structured?**

**A:** The redevelopment will include a refurbished clinic that will ensure GP services are retained and provide expanded services to improve access for the community. In the meantime, the GP service at Yarra Valley Community Medical Service will continue to operate as normal, providing the community with the high-quality care they deserve. Eastern Health values the collaborative partnership we have with GPs and we continue to work with them to provide health services for the community.

**Q: Will local GPs have their admitting rights reinstated when the new hospital opens?**

**A:** Eastern Health continues to support direct admissions from GPs. GPs can admit patients now and will continue to be able to post the redevelopment – there has been no change. Once patients are admitted, the GP has the choice of visiting and providing direct care themselves or asking Eastern Health consultants and registrars to provide all care. While some GPs continue to see their own patients when they are admitted, this is a very small number and the majority of GPs request that Eastern Health’s consultants and registrars care for their patient while they are in hospital. Our consultants and registrars work very closely with all of the GPs who admit patients to Healesville & District Hospital.

**Q: What type of surgery is currently available at Healesville & District Hospital?**

**A:** Eastern Health provides a comprehensive range of surgical services for people living in the east. Surgical services are provided at Angliss Hospital in Upper Ferntree Gully, Box Hill Hospital, Healesville & District Hospital, Maroondah Hospital in Ringwood East and Yarra Ranges Health in Lilydale. Patients undergoing surgery are allocated to the site that best meets their healthcare requirements.

Healesville & District Hospital offers a range of surgical services including general surgery, gynaecology and endoscopy services. Yarra Ranges Health in Lilydale provides low-complexity same-day general surgery, urology, plastics, gynaecology and endoscopy procedures.

A new gynaecologist commenced at Healesville & District Hospital in January 2015, providing day procedure gynaecology every fortnight.

**Q: Are the doctors who work at Healesville & District Hospital qualified?**

**A:** The new seven-days-a-week doctor service is a great addition to our hospital and our advanced general physician and geriatrician registrars are a huge asset to our organisation. Patients admitted to Eastern Health hospitals, including Healesville & District Hospital, are cared for by a range of medical professionals, which is consistent with practices in hospitals and healthcare organisations around the world.

**Q: Will there be an “urgent care” facility at Healesville & District Hospital?**

**A:** No, it is not part of the redevelopment plan. However, we will seek discussion and collaboration with the Eastern Primary Health Network (formerly Medicare Local) to investigate alternative ways to provide this service in the community.

Latest project newsletters and media releases are available on the project website at [www.easternhealth.org.au](http://www.easternhealth.org.au). You can also follow Eastern Health on Twitter and Facebook, where we will post regular updates.