



Media release

The Hon David Davis MLC

Minister for Health
Minister for Ageing

Thursday 26 June 2014

Sign up for Ambulance Victoria membership today

- **Three month waiver for ambulance membership waiting period**
- **Election commitment delivered to halve the cost of ambulance membership**
- **Victorian Coalition Government building a healthier Victoria**

Ambulance Victoria will waive the normal 60-day waiting period for non-emergency transports or emergency call-outs for pre-existing medical conditions for three months to coincide with a campaign to encourage Victorians to take out membership, Minister for Health David Davis said today.

From July 1, the cost of an annual subscription will rise in line with the consumer price index (2.5 per cent) to \$82.60 per family or \$41.30 for singles.

“Despite this modest increase in line with inflation, an Ambulance Victoria membership is still the best way to provide families peace of mind that they will not be sent a bill in the event of needing an ambulance,” Mr Davis said.

In 2011, the Victorian Coalition Government delivered an election commitment to halve the cost of ambulance membership, resulting in an additional 40,593 family and 51,976 single memberships.

Mr Davis said 53 per cent of eligible Victorians were currently covered by membership subscriptions, which means they do not pay fees for ambulance travel.

The fee structure for ambulance services will be simplified, doing away with the current complex, inconsistent and unfair model, Mr Davis said.

“The botched merger of Ambulance Victoria, overseen by Daniel Andrews when he was health minister, condemned it to regular budget deficits,” Mr Davis said.

“This new model will repair the damage done by Daniel Andrews and ensure this vital emergency service is sustainable in the long term.

“A sustainable future for Ambulance Victoria means it can continue to achieve world-class outcomes when responding to patients suffering cardiac arrest, heart attack, trauma and stroke.

“The new structure will see the introduction of a simple flat fee for emergency road transport outside Melbourne, replacing the existing complicated formula of a flagfall and per-kilometre charge.”

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The new fee structure, to be introduced on July 1, is as follows:

- Emergency road ambulance \$1115 for metro and \$1645 rural, previously an average of \$925 metro and \$3412 rural;
- Non-emergency road ambulance stretcher transfer \$301 for metro and \$509 for rural, previously an average of \$446 metro and \$475 rural;
- Non-emergency clinic car transfer \$99, previously an average of \$116; and
- Ambulance attendance but no transport \$481.

Pensioners, Health Care Card holders and other eligible patients will continue to receive free clinically necessary ambulance transport for most services, including transport to and from public hospitals.

Private healthcare facilities will be responsible for paying for the transport of pensioners and Health Care Card holders from their facilities.

“Private health funds set their own rules and may or may not provide ambulance cover or full coverage,” Mr Davis said.

“They may only provide partial cover such as one emergency transport per year or only cover costs up to a certain amount. If the private health funds don’t offer full coverage, people should vote with their feet and switch funds.

“Or for full peace of mind, everyone should consider taking out an Ambulance Victoria subscription, take advantage of the waiting period waiver, and ensure they have full cover in the event of a private hospital stay.

“Ambulance membership guarantees the member free ambulance services. I encourage all Victorians to join the membership subscription scheme.”

Media contact: Ashley Gardiner 0427 560 438 ashley.gardiner@minstaff.vic.gov.au