

>> Budget brings \$200 million funding for Victorian Hospitals

Cancer care set to come to Kyabram

Kyabram and District Health Service will soon welcome same-day oncology services after being one of the few regional groups to receive funding in the latest Victorian budget.

KDHS received a commitment from the government under the \$200 million Hospital Beds Rescue Fund to establish the service, but is awaiting advice from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Specifics of the funding being provided are yet to be confirmed, but KDHS has said it estimates the new service will treat 461 local people annually.

KDHS chief executive Peter Abraham said he was extremely delighted with the outcome.

"KDHS has long recognised the need for a local chemotherapy service as a key

plank in our cancer services programs," he said.

"As we know, a significant proportion of our population are touched by cancer. Population data tells us that at any one time, approximately 300 members of our community are receiving active treatment for cancer.

"Whilst it is important to note that this new service will provide low-level chemotherapy within the state-safe guidelines, for a service such as ours without full-time oncologist support, a significant proportion of those requiring ongoing treatment will be able to receive much of their treatment program locally."

Board chairwoman Maureen Atkins also expressed her approval of the government's commitment.

"This is an excellent outcome for our health service and more importantly for our community," she said.

Maureen said it was recognition of the "work of the staff and the Board in continually further service options for our health service that meet the needs of our community."

The Andrews Government has said the \$200 million being put into the Hospital Beds Rescue Fund will allow Victorian hospitals to admit more than 19 800 extra patients annually.

The government said it was expected to increase capacity, treat more patients sooner and reduce elective surgery waits and waiting times in emergency departments.

KDHS will enter into a formal three-month planning phase prior to the service beginning.