

WA boosting health system capacity for COVID-19 critical care

Tuesday, 31 March 2020

The McGowan Government is working to increase the number of ventilators and ICU beds available

A further 301 ventilators and 200 ICU beds are being ordered

The equipment will complement a wide-ranging program to increase capacity across the public and private hospital systems

Hundreds of new beds and extra beds created through reconfiguration of services

The McGowan Government has ordered more than \$15 million worth of clinical equipment to boost the public health system's response to the COVID-19 crisis.

On order, and arriving in batches, are:

- 301 ventilators;

- 201 humidifiers;

- 4,000 pulse oximeters; and

- 200 ICU beds.

The private hospital sector will add further capacity to the system.

This equipment is being sourced from a range of global suppliers, and will arrive in batches - the first is due in Perth in the coming weeks.

Also being ordered are 200 ICU beds with their associated equipment - infusion pumps, syringe drivers and vital signs monitoring systems to equip these beds.

The McGowan Government has also initiated a major capacity building program, creating hundreds of new beds across the public hospital system to fight the COVID-19 crisis.

For example, the East Metropolitan Health Service has increased capacity by 185 beds by reconfiguring wards and hospital services, such as pausing maternity services at Bentley.

The maternity services have now been transferred to specialist services at both Armadale Hospital and King Edward Memorial Hospital.

Across the health system all our hospitals are actively increasing capacity, with all health service providers working to ensure our system is best placed to take on the challenge of dealing with this pandemic.

Comments attributed to Health Minister Roger Cook:

"The State Government is committed to minimising the impact of COVID-19 on the WA community and while our efforts to date have been focused on containing the virus, we must prepare for the prospect of more cases becoming seriously ill.

"We need to be flexible and nimble in our approach and with the reconfiguration of beds across the system, together with valuable capacity from the private sector, we are well placed to cater for an increase in demand.

"The new equipment will significantly enhance the ability of our medical staff to care for an expected increase in cases.

"All these new initiatives are just the first stage of increasing capacity across the public hospital system to fight the COVID-19 crisis."

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