

# 'They'll die in agony'

## Palliative service fears

EXCLUSIVE  
MITCH CLARKE

DYING Victorians may experience a "horrible death" and be without vital palliative care services unless the major political parties commit to meaningful investment, key sector bosses have warned.

The desperate call follows a report commissioned by Palliative Care Victoria which found 75 per cent of service providers don't believe they can meet future demand, with a projected \$91m annual shortfall in the state's sector by 2025.

The Queensland government last week committed more than \$170m in extra funding, while NSW this year invested \$74.3m.

But Palliative Care Victoria chief Violet Platt said funding levels in Victoria hadn't kept pace with increased demand.

Estimates for Australian Palliative Care predict a 50 per cent rise in demand by 2035, and a 100 per cent rise by 2050.

"In the short term, palliative care services will need to limit their input to shorter end of life episodes of care and commence wait lists for access to service," Ms Platt told the Herald Sun.

"In the longer term, rationalising who can access palliative care will become a reality with such a scant resource available. Both of which mean people who are living with life-limiting conditions will have unresolved symptoms and unnecessary distress.

"Talking about death and dying is something that we re-

main reluctant to talk about. Despite being a vital service to Victorians, we only die once and need to do this well."

Palliative Care South East chief Kelly Rogerson said underfunding the system will have a major effect on hospitals and the availability of beds.

"Every palliative patient that goes to hospital averages nine bed days, which is double the average bed days of another medical patient so for every palliative client we can keep out of hospital, another two can get in," she said.

"If we can't provide timely services to people when they need them because we are under-resourced, they will be in pain, their symptoms won't be managed and they will end up in the ED of a hospital.

"They may have a horrible death, they won't die in their place of choice, they may take up a hospital bed that could have gone to someone else, their families won't have the support they need and this can lead to extended and complicated grief."

Ms Rogerson said community palliative care services received \$32m in the May budget, including \$18.4m this year and \$14m next year.

But she called for the state's end of life and palliative care framework to be reviewed.

"Politicians may think there are no votes in people dying but they shouldn't forget that for everyone that dies there are loved ones left behind who are impacted and do vote," she said.

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## SOLAR BLACKSPOT CASTS SHADOW ON POWER PLAY

MITCH CLARKE  
KIERAN ROONEY

DANIEL Andrews has unveiled yet another renewable energy commitment, despite admitting he doesn't have solar installed at his home.

The Premier on Thursday pledged \$42m to install 100 neighbourhood batteries in a move that would help 25,000 homes access local renewable energy, tripling the number of properties with access to a battery.

If re-elected, Labor will initially install the batteries in 28 communities across Victoria - 15 in metropolitan Melbourne and 13 in regional Victoria.

Mr Andrews said the government would work with

community organisations, local governments and distribution companies to identify the locations for the remaining 72 batteries.

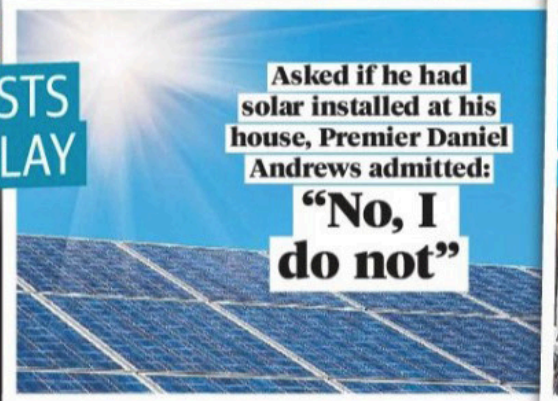
It builds on existing neighbourhood batteries in Fitzroy North and Yackandandah and those being built in Tarnet and Phillip Island.

Mr Andrews, who has long spruiked the importance of renewable energy, said only Labor is taking real action to fight climate change.

But asked if he had solar installed at his house, Mr Andrews admitted: "No, I do not."

"That's something that we may well do in the future," the Premier said.

"If we put solar panels on our home, I would not be



Asked if he had solar installed at his house, Premier Daniel Andrews admitted:

**"No, I do not"**

accessing the scheme. I think I might leave that spot for someone else. There's some pretty significant workforce shortages here.

"I'm much more focused on the cost of living for households other than my house.

"I don't know that's necessarily the leadership that you need to be offering, but anything you can do to help people save on their

power bills is critically important."

Meanwhile, Opposition leader Matthew Guy announced that women who may need to freeze their eggs would be able to access grants of \$7000 if he became Premier.

He said \$21m would be spent over four years to support women with medical conditions that affect fertility - such as endometriosis - so

## Secret court battles in attempt to muzzle corruption watchdog

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The plaintiffs, who cannot be named for legal reasons, claim IBAC's powers "are inconsistent" with the EBA scheme contained in the Fair Work Act, and are invalid.

If IBAC loses, it could be forced to scrap the release of the investigation, which it has spent almost four years on.

However, court orders restrict what can be reported in relation to the investigation or legal challenge.

The court has already ruled in favour of IBAC, finding no inconsistency between the en-

terprise-agreement scheme in the Fair Work Act and the IBAC Act.

"Protecting the state from corruption of its public bodies and public officers is an essential task of the state and it is entitled to use the means it thinks appropriate," the court said.

"Bodies similar to the IBAC are widely, although not universally, deployed by governments to rid themselves of corruption. The integrity of officers of the state, particularly those at a senior level, who it might be thought would be involved in advising the govern-

ment about enterprise agreements, is essential to the functioning of the state.

"The making of enterprise agreements involving (redacted) is an aspect 'of a State's functions which are critical to its capacity to function as a government'. The acceptance of the plaintiffs' submissions would, in a significant manner, curtail or interfere with the exercise of the state's constitutional power."

The court found that the effect of the plaintiffs' submissions would be "to impair the capacity of the State of Victor-

ia to function as a government that is capable of keeping its executive accountable and free of, and protected from, corrupt conduct".

In the Woodman probe, a secret judgment was handed down yesterday in the Supreme Court, but it is expected to remain sealed for weeks following closed court hearings. Mr Woodman sought an injunction to stop IBAC from tabling a report in state parliament over Casey land deals. It is understood redactions must be made to the document before it may become

public. Mr Woodman's court action delayed IBAC's report into allegedly corrupt land deals, dubbed Operation Sandon, from being made public.

Mr Andrews was among those quizzed in the probe.

With the polls set to open on Monday, Mr Andrews is facing increasing pressure over several integrity issues, also including government grants provided to the Health Workers' Union on the eve of the 2018 election, as revealed by the Herald Sun.

The funding was signed off on October 30, before the elec-

tion began and just a week after a training program grant was first announced. It formed part of a multimillion-dollar package for the training of hospital staff announced a week before the government went into caretaker mode.

On the HWU probe, Mr Andrews said: "Regardless of any smear, innuendo or media reporting based on anonymous sources, the only IBAC matters I will comment on are those that are the subject of a final report - as is appropriate and has always been my practice."