

## Bed increase welcomed

VICTORIAN doctors have welcomed the State Government's announcement to increase capacity at Latrobe Regional Hospital with an additional nine hospital beds.

AMA Victoria president Dr Doug Travis said the extra beds were a much-needed addition to the overstretched hospital.

"These additional beds are vital for the care of our growing and ageing population," Dr Travis said.

"Pressures at Latrobe Regional Hospital have escalated over the past year, with admissions increasing five per cent.

"Increasing hospital capacity is a good start toward fixing the state's broken system and improving patient care.

"We can then start adding innovation to the system to deliver the best possible care to all Victorians."

Dr Travis said the initial December 2008 announcement of 276 extra beds for Victoria's public hospital system was praised by doctors across the state and was a vital element in the public hospital doctors' enterprise bargaining offer.

Dr Travis added that hospital beds were about much more than the physical bed.

"It's the additional medical and nursing staff, and the equipment to care for the patient that makes the difference."

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