

**Ambulance
Victoria**



Introducing the Residential Aged Care Enhanced Response (RACER) pathway

Stakeholder briefing pack



What is RACER?

RACER is an alternative care pathway that better connects and coordinates Triple 000 calls from residential aged care facilities (RACFs) to meet the patient's needs and avoid **unnecessary** ambulance dispatch and transport to hospital emergency departments.

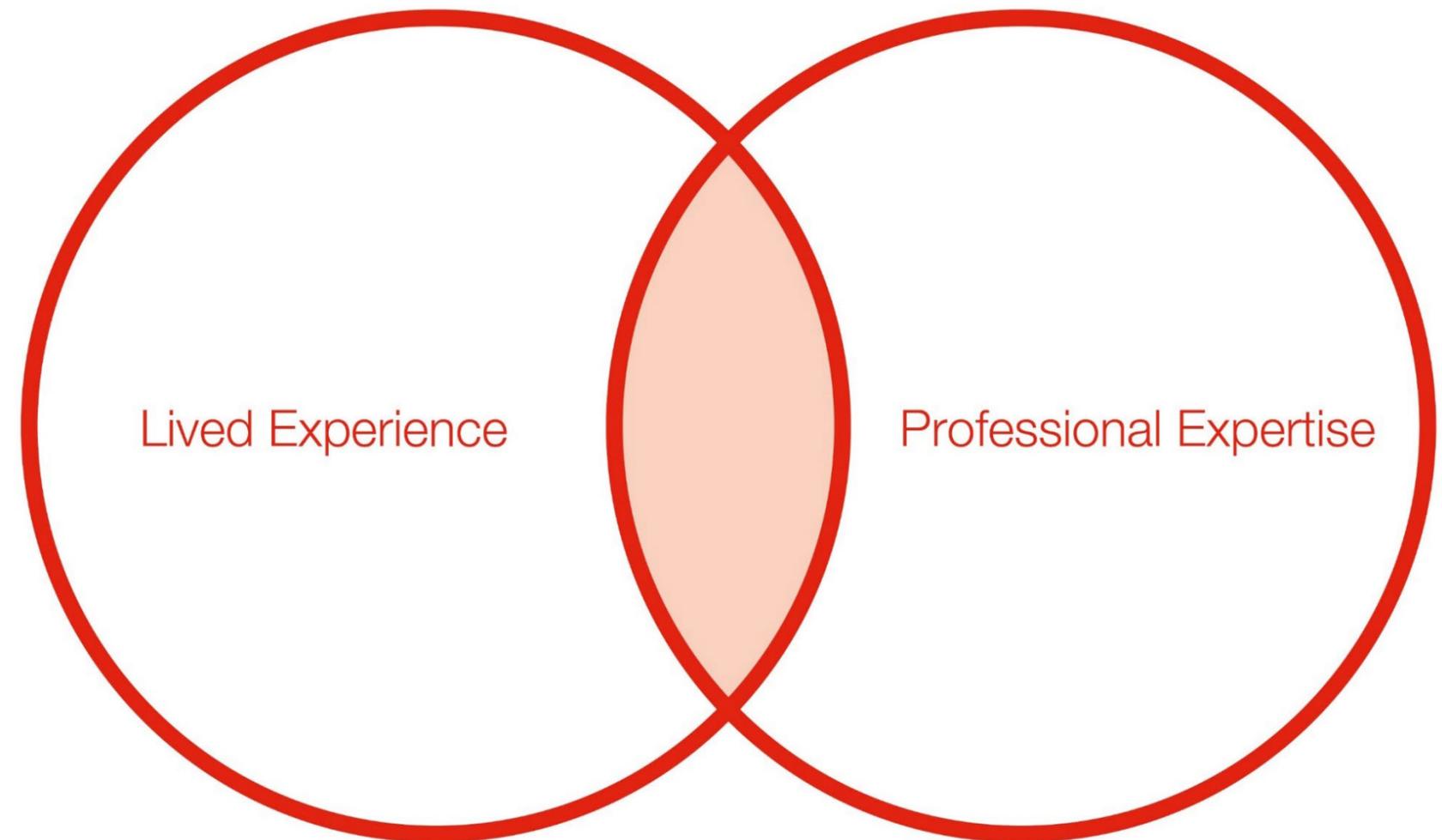


How RACER came to be – Patient Care Academy and the co-design process



The Patient Care Academy (PCA) is a group comprised of consumers, clinicians and system partners that comes together to collaborate innovative projects that:

- develop solutions to everyday patient challenges; and
- accelerate innovation and improvements in patient care.



AV Care Connect

In 2022, a PCA-led program of work known as 'AV Care Connect' is introducing more alternative care pathways to our service to better connect patients to the care they need other than an on-road emergency response (which will still always be delivered if required).

RACER is the **first** alternative care pathway under the AV Care Connect initiative, which includes four streams of work.



AV Care Connect

Introducing more alternative care pathways to better connect some of our most vulnerable patients to the care they need.

**Older Person
Care Connect**

**Palliative Care
Connect**

**Mental Health
Care Connect**

**Frequent and
Complex Caller
Care Connect**

**Residential Aged Care
Enhanced Response
(RACER)**



Context for change – why we need RACER

Every day...



Approximately **85 emergency ambulances** attend to patients in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs), equating to roughly **5% of all emergency ambulance dispatches**



Of those patients, **90%** are transported to an Emergency Department. **Up to 40%** of them don't need to be.



In addition, **another 100 Non-Emergency ambulances** are dispatched to patients in RACFs.



Only 3 patients in RACFs have their cases managed via an Alternative Service Pathway.

(Source: Morphet, J., Innes, K., Griffiths, D., Crawford, K. and Williams, A. (2015) 'Resident transfers from aged care facilities to emergency departments: Can they be avoided?', Emergency Medicine Australasia, vol. 27, pp. 412-418.)



How RACER works

RACER

01



A Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) calls Triple Zero (000).

02



The call is triaged by ESTA.



a. If the call is triaged as a Code 0/1 – which requires a lights and sirens response – then an ambulance will be dispatched.



i. Upon arrival, the attending crew will consult with the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED) where appropriate as per the Clinical Guidelines.



b. If the call is triaged as non-emergency or as a Code 2/3 then it will be transferred to AV's Triage Services.

03



A Referral Service Triage Practitioner (RSTP) will conduct a clinical assessment. The outcome may include any of the following.



a. Dispatch of an emergency ambulance if the patient is recategorised as Code 0/1.



i. Upon arrival, the attending crew will consult with the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED) where appropriate as per the Clinical Guidelines.



b. Referral to a local alternative service provider – such as an existing Residential In-Reach (RIR) service.

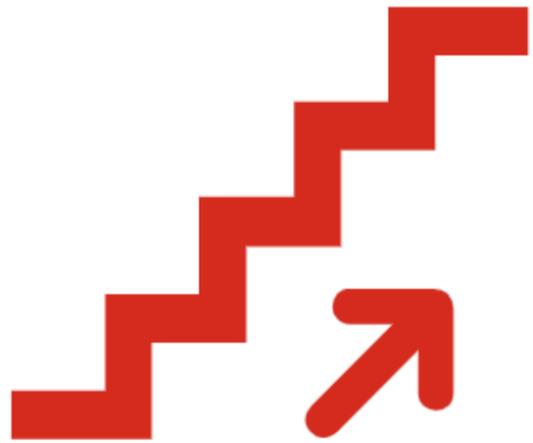


c. Immediate referral to the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED).

The RACER pathway will be accessible 24/7 across ALL regions.



The staged approach



- Stage One – patients from the non-emergency patient transport booking system– *August 2022*
- Stage Two – low acuity patients from the emergency patient (excluding 0/1) – *date to be determined.*



Patient Criteria



Patient inclusion criteria

- Patients residing in RACFs who are triaged as Code 2/3 and non-emergency patients, including those patients who a locum, GP or Registered Nurse (RN) has assessed and recommended transport.

Patient exclusion criteria

- Patients residing in RACFs who are triaged as Code 0/1.
- Patients residing in RACFs who are triaged as Code 2/3 but are likely to require surgical management (e.g. suspected fractured neck of femur) or have a time critical emergency.
- Patients residing in RACFs without a suitable device to conduct a video teleconference.



RACER's benefits

- Reduces unnecessary transport of older patients to emergency departments.
- Improves the patient experience and outcomes for Residential Aged Care Facility residents, their families, and carers.
- Reduces the risk of delirium and healthcare acquired trauma, infections and mortality that can be associated with hospitalisation of older people.
- Reduces non-urgent call outs and improve ambulance availability for the acutely unwell.
- Reduces total case time
- Improves skills and capacity regarding care of older people, through support from an Older Person Care Connect Lead (a subject matter expert in Aged Care services) embedded within AV's Triage Services.



Information sheets and FAQs

Residential Aged Care Enhanced Response (RACER)

An enhanced pre-hospital response for patients living in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs)

A better model of care for patients living in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs) who call Triple Zero (000)

Ambulance Victoria (AV) is introducing the Residential Aged Care Enhanced Response (RACER) pathway that aims to better connect and coordinate Triple Zero (000) calls from residential aged care facilities (RACFs) to better meet the patient's needs and avoid unnecessary ambulance dispatch and transport to hospital emergency departments (EDs).

EDs are often the default destination for the traditional ambulance response, which is not always in the best interests of the RACF patient or the health system.

From Thursday 4 August 2022 at 0830, AV's Triage Services will begin referring patients from the non-emergency patient transport booking system directly to the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED) at the point of triage instead of dispatching an ambulance.

The RACER pathway is being rolled out in a staged approach, starting with patients from the non-emergency patient transport booking system to ensure that the pathway is comprehensively tested in operation and safety netted before it expands to low acuity patients from the emergency patient cohort. A date for this Stage 2 expansion is yet to be set.

The Patient

The RACER vision is to provide patients with integrated and effective care that takes account of and is organised around their individual health and social needs – ensuring they receive Best Care every time.

Inclusion criteria

- Non-emergency low acuity patients residing in RACFs, including those patients who a locum, GP or RN has assessed and recommended transport.

Exclusion criteria

- Patients residing in RACFs who have a time critical emergency.
- Patients residing in RACFs who are likely to require surgical management (e.g. suspected fractured neck of femur).
- Patients residing in RACFs without a suitable device to conduct a video teleconference.

Every Day



Approximately **85 emergency ambulances** attend to patients in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs), equating to roughly **5% of all emergency ambulance dispatches**.



In addition, another **100 Non-Emergency ambulances** are dispatched to patients in RACFs.



Of those patients, **90%** are transported to an Emergency Department. **Up to 40%** of them don't need to be.



Only 3 patients in RACFs have their cases managed via an Alternative Service Pathway.

Frequently Asked Questions

Residential Aged Care Enhanced Response

What is the RACER pathway of care?

The Residential Aged Care Enhanced Response (RACER) pathway is one of our AV Care Connect initiatives. It provides an alternative care pathway to better connect and coordinate Triple Zero (000) calls from residential aged care facilities (RACFs) to meet the patient's needs and avoid unnecessary ambulance dispatch and transport to hospital emergency departments (EDs).

The RACER pathway involves AV's Triage Services team, including subject matter experts in aged care services, referring non-urgent and non-emergency patients from RACFs to the most appropriate alternative service pathway, including directly to the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED) so that RACF patients are not unnecessarily transported to hospital EDs.

When did RACER 'Go Live'?

The RACER pathway went 'Live' on Thursday 4 August at 0830 in a staged approach starting with non-emergency low acuity patients. From Thursday 4 August at 0830, AV's Triage Services began referring patients from the non-emergency patient transport booking system directly to the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED) at the point of triage instead of dispatching an ambulance. The staged approach will ensure that the pathway is comprehensively tested in operation and safety netted before it expands to low acuity patients from the emergency patient cohort.

Is the RACER pathway a state-wide pathway?

Yes, the RACER pathway supports all Victorians.

What are the RACER pathway's hours of operation?

The RACER pathway operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

What are the benefits of the RACER pathway?

Before the introduction of the RACER pathway, all calls made from a Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) to Triple Zero (000) have historically been triaged via the standard Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA) process. This has meant that over 90% of calls from RACFs that receive an ambulance response result in the patient attending an Emergency Department – which is not always the best place for them – as the risk of delirium and healthcare acquired trauma, infections and mortality can be associated with hospitalisation of older people.

We know we can do better to connect older patients in RACFs to more appropriate care in the first instance to reduce distress, risk of delirium and other hospital-acquired infections, trauma and mortality that can be associated with hospitalisation for this cohort. From Thursday 4 August at 0830, AV's Triage Services will refer RACF patients to the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED) at the point of call instead of dispatching an ambulance unless the patient:

- has a time critical emergency.
- is likely to require surgical management (e.g. suspected fractured neck of femur).
- does not have access to a suitable device to conduct a video teleconference.

What you need to know

- Stage 1 of the RACER pathway will 'go live' in August 2022.
- We have presented this information to Ambulance Victoria's Operational leadership teams so that they and their teams are aware of the change.

How you can help

- Share the stakeholder pack with your leadership team as required.
- Refer any questions about RACER to OlderPersonCareConnect@ambulance.vic.gov.au



**Ambulance
Victoria**



AV's Triage Services

Stakeholder briefing pack

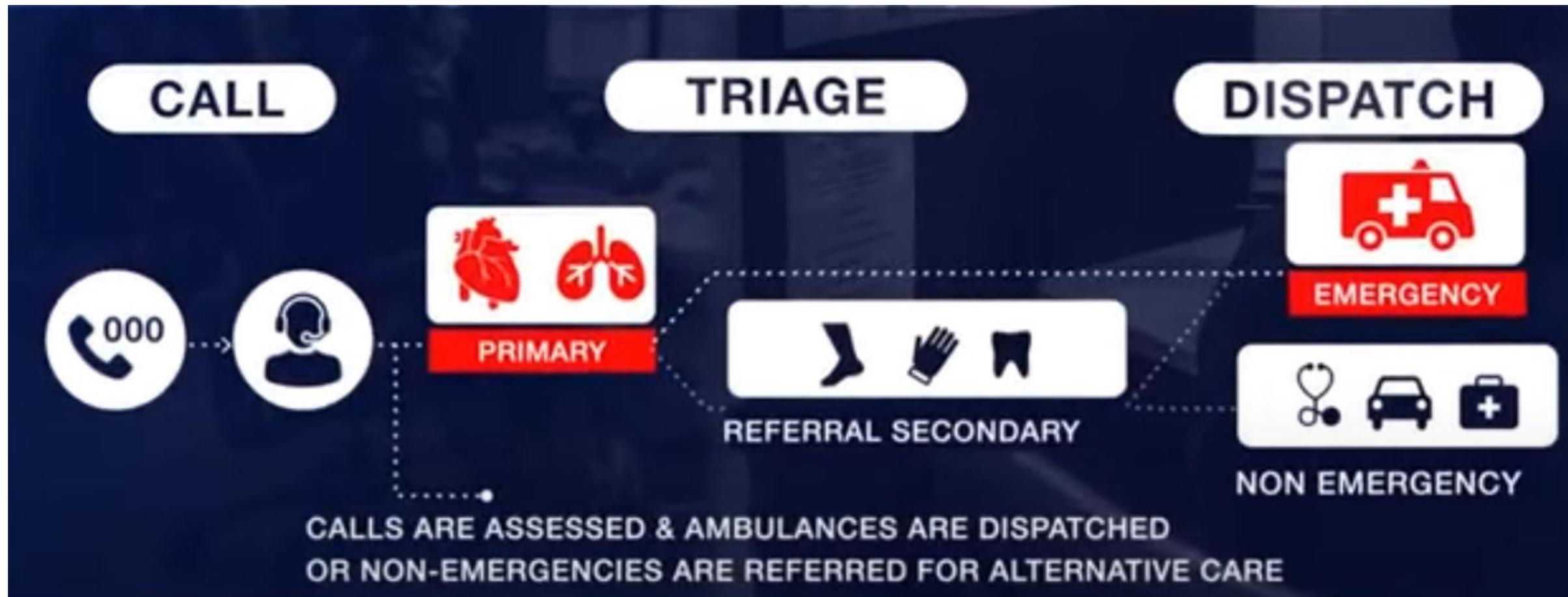


More than one-in-five calls to Triple Zero (000) do not need an emergency ambulance response.



What is AV's Triage Service?

Ambulance Victoria's Triage Service provides an important safety net to ensure that any emergencies that reach secondary triage – rather than immediately receiving an ambulance dispatch via the ESTA process – are identified and get an emergency response, and that non-emergencies can be safely and appropriately referred to patient transport ambulances or alternative health services or pathways (like RACER) to better meet their needs.



Who works in AV's Triage Services?

Referral Service Triage Practitioners (RSTPs) – highly skilled nurses or paramedics with at least four years' experience working in healthcare – work within AV's Triage Services.



Triage Services in 2022

We are responding to around 1800-2000 emergency cases a day state-wide.

Every day, **more than 700 of those calls are not urgent and put through to our 24-hour Triage Service.**

If you do get transferred here – either as part of the RACER pathway or separate to that pathway – it is important to know that you are in expert hands.

