Health Priorities for Tasmanians

2024 Election

The following are a list of initiatives that meets the needs of Tasmanians that will:

    i.   improve access to health care for regional and remote communities
    ii.   improve Tasmanian's ability to stay healthy
    iii.   strengthen accountability across the Health Portfolio
    iv.   reduce cost of living pressures for people requiring repeat visits to health care
    v.   ensure the ongoing work of Health Consumers Tasmania is able to continue

Access to regional and remote health care

1. Each regional and remote LGA has access to a mobile health hub and or a similar health information hub to provide a mix of outreach health care, social and mental wellbeing support, information and navigational support.

2. Each regional and remote LGA across Tasmania has a community-led decision-making body to ensure local communities have a say on the mix of health care service in their locality. (HCT State Budget Priority Statement -Health Wellbeing Model)

3. Provide ongoing annual funding for place-based health and wellbeing networks (Health Consumers Tasmania State Budget Priority Statement)
    5.1 Scottsdale, the Huon and Ulverstone ($990,000 per annum)
    5.2 Ouse ($230,000 per annum)

4. Tasman Peninsula
    3.1 The Nubeena Medical Centre has the capacity and resources to provide 24/7 urgent care including additional registered nurses and a nurse practitioner
    3.2 Upgrade Telehealth infrastructure at the Nubeena MPS to allow for community use for medical and specialist consults
    3.3 Employ an extended care paramedic and 2nd ambulance and crew (double branch station) be located on the Peninsula
    3.4 Employ a social worker to support young adults on the Peninsula

5. The Ouse Community have access to
    4.1 A nurse practitioner model of care supported by an advanced care paramedic
    4.2 Upgrade Telehealth to allow the community to use for medical consults
    4.3 Upgrade health transport for locals to access the Ouse Community Health Centre and essential health services outside of the local community.

6. For all regional and remote LGA's across Tasmania where access to healthcare is either problematic or does not exist, establish nurse practitioner model of care, supported by advanced care paramedic and telehealth services to a supporting GP practice

Health Prevention

7. Health Consumers Tasmania requests that every Tasmanian, if they choose, can have access to a free health and well-being check once every two years – health prevention.

8. Expand delivery of healthcare to the homeless or those at risk of becoming homeless.

Health Sector

9. Establish an independent Health Commissioner that is separate from Government with extensive powers to: investigate complaints and undertake its own investigations, independently review Government progress on delivering recommendations on health related reviews or enquiries (for example – the parliamentary transfer of care review). This office needs to include a stronger consumer driven, coordinated approach for the health complaints process which includes better and more coordinated mechanisms for complaints and consumer feedback to occur.

10. Update appropriate Hospital policies and procedures that allow patients the right to request

    10.1 telehealth consuls as an option to reduce the burden and cost of travel, particularly for follow up procedures

    10.2 multiple visits (eg, pre and post-surgery) to occur on the same day rather than requiring multiple trips to the hospital on different days

Funding Health Consumers Tasmania

11. Provide a base increase in HCT core funding amount from $300,000 per annum (set in 2016) to $750,000 per annum.

The 10 priority areas that the Tasmanian Government needs to focus on relating to health and wellbeing are listed below. These can be categorized as either:

i. The broader social issues that impact a person's health and wellbeing – these include:
    Housing and Cost-of-Living issues

ii. Hospital Performance
    Emergency department and Elective surgery and outpatient wait times
    Ambulance ramping

iii. Access to health care – community-based health services
    Mental health services
    Increased options for after-hours medical services
    Improving rural health service access including mobile 'health hubs' for rural areas
    Dental/Oral Health Services

Priority areas for Governments to focus[1]	Percent
Housing Crisis	36.6
Mental health services	33.3
Emergency department wait times	29.3
Increased options for after-hours medical services	28.5
Elective surgery and outpatient wait times	25.2
Cost-of-Living	25.2
Improving rural health service access	23.6
Dental/Oral Health Services	22.8
Ambulance ramping	22.0
Mobile 'health hubs' for rural areas	21.1
Expanding Virtual Care and telehealth	20.3
A greater focus on health promotion activities	20.3
Health literacy programs	19.5
People to guide us through the health system (Health Care Navigation)	18.7
Social Prescribing (doctors refer people to social support in addition to clinical support)	17.9
Urgent Care Clinics in your area	17.9
Developing place-based solutions to local health problems	13.8
Transitions of Care (eg. from hospital to home)	13.0
Improving mental wellbeing	11.4
Improving Transport	10.6
Community nursing	8.9
Improved information sharing (incl. MyHealth Record)	8.9
Youth health initiatives	8.9
Screening and imaging (improved access and affordability)	8.1
Ending loneliness	5.7
Improving care options and support for Long COVID	1.6

[1] HCT Community of Interest Survey – 130 participants, 1 August 2023