

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Our Healthcare Future](#)
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[Consultation questions.docx](#)

Dear Future HealthCare Team

I am very interested in submitting some ideas for the HealthCare Future reform initiative and answer some of the consultation questions.

As with many health care professionals , my time is limited so my answers and ideas at this stage may only be brief for this opportunity. I am happy to follow up with more detail if these are options that you will follow up.

In summary, I believe the main focus for Health Care future should be on preventative health and the introduction/implementation of programs that support people in improving health literacy, exercise, healthy eating choices and pain education. This can be effectively delivered via telehealth and/or face to face group sessions which are economically viable. Physiotherapists and Exercise Physiologists are well positioned to deliver this care and education and are already doing so in many states and workplaces.

Programs such as the well evidenced GLAD program <https://gladaustralia.com.au/> for hip and knee OA are being rolled out throughout the world. Joint replacement wait lists can be helped by adequately funding non- surgical care. There is strong evidence that exercise provides the same, if not better long term outcomes as surgery for some knee, shoulder, hip and spinal pathologies. I see that Tasmania could be a leader in investing in such programs. Very few people on surgical and outpatient waitlists adequately try non-surgical options and funding is the main limitation. All people on a surgical waiting list should be receiving some direction towards an exercise program. There is evidence that when this occurs, a significant proportion drop off the list and decide they do not need surgery. Unfortunately, the few funded health prevention/exercise based programs we had years ago were ceased. I am not aware of what vision there is now for spending on health prevention, physical activity and exercise based programs but feel really hopeful for the future.

I have provided some evidence for exercise over surgery and relevant information for informing best practice <https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-019-4660-6>.

I have provided a few ideas very briefly addressing some of the questions in the document attached.

I am happy discuss this further when convenient or assist in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity.

Kind regards

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Consultation questions

Reform Initiative 1 – Consultation questions:

1 How can we target better our current investment as well as future investments in health to ensure a sustainable and balanced mix of services is delivered across the whole of the health system to provide right care in the right place at the right time?

Focus a large percentage of funds on preventative health and community care to keep people well and out of the hospital system.

2 How can we shift the focus from hospital based care to better community care in the community?

Increase community centre use and size to offer more group services such as exercise classes, mental health, meditation, food preparation, managing pain, diabetes, how to access telehealth and even craft work to aid social interaction which helps mental health. Employ a mix of allied health professionals and aids, personal trainers, members of the community with a special interest (in a craft) and volunteers.

5 How can we make better use of telehealth, so people can receive care closer to home, and what are the barriers preventing utilisation of telehealth?

Older people require a mentor or buddy to teach them how to use telehealth. An online education course or group session in community centres with healthcare workers would be good.

10 How can we build health literacy, self-management and preventative health approaches into the day-to-day practices of our health services across the whole of the health system?

11 How can we better incorporate preventative health and health literacy initiatives into current and future care, across the range of settings, including acute, community, primary and private?

Provide a united message of the importance of exercise and aim to keep people active and reduce the use of medication where appropriate eg opioids. Provide a clear pathway and opportunities for people to exercise at any level. Eg bike paths, pools, safe areas, community halls/centres. Provide classes at all levels like the Active Launceston initiative.

12 How do we provide clear pathways into our health system so that patients are accessing the most appropriate care for them?

Reform Initiative 2 – Consultation questions:

7 How can we use technology to empower patients with their own self-care?

Use exercise apps, telehealth for exercise programs and information eg around pain, osteoarthritis. Provide education freely, use the newspaper and television to spread health literacy education and positive messages. Provide a hotline for health information that is related to prevention and exercise.

8 What is the key paper or manual administrative process that would provide the most benefit to digitise/bring online?

Reform Initiative 3a – Consultation questions:

1 What are the major priorities that should be considered in the development of a 20 year infrastructure strategy?

As stated above: Preventative Health and access for all within a community level to reduce hospital admissions and chronic disease.

1 How should the Health Workforce 2040 strategy be further refined to guide and inform the development of a strong and sustainable professional workforce that is aligned to meeting the future health needs of Tasmanians?

Increase focus on allied health services to assist health care efficiency by providing triage in emergency department, group exercises and education sessions.

2 How do we work with the private sector, as well as other levels of government, to ensure our combined workforce serves the future needs of our community?

Set up focus/discussion groups and brainstorm with health professionals in the private sector. As they are time poor some incentive may be required for their time. Offer funding/grants for initiatives that are evidence based.

3 What steps can be taken to improve the State's ability to attract and retain health professionals in regional areas, particularly the North West?

Provide a bursary to university students, funding for students, housing and of course a competitive salary. Help fund, support and promote a Physiotherapy, Speech and other allied health university courses at Utas.

6 How do we support Tasmanians to access the education and training they need to be part of the State's future workforce?

Offer scholarship opportunities to current Tasmanian Health providers who may not be able to travel interstate to further their professional development.

7 What format would be best to engage our future health leaders

Involve them in the political decision making process, invite them to focus groups ask their opinions and ideas.