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To whom it may concern,

Attached is TasCOSS' response to the *Advancing Tasmania's Health* exposure draft.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this document. We have read and endorse the response from Health Consumers Tasmania, and wish to make some additional comments on the documents.

TasCOSS as well as many of our members provided input to the Our Healthcare Future consultations and we are pleased to see this document adopt many of the themes we raised. In particular we were pleased to see the 'strategic ambitions' include four key aspects of healthcare that Tasmanians consistently tell us are important to them. These are 'Strengthening prevention' - evidence shows that prevention is a far more cost-effective approach to spending in health than waiting until an individual needs more acute care. Second, 'Partnering with consumers and clinicians to co design, implement and evaluate the health system.' This is consistent with patient-centred care and better outcomes for health consumers and Tasmanians say they want more involvement in how their care is designed and delivered. The third direction that is welcome is 'Better and more accessible community care', because we know that not only does community-based care help people stay well in place, but physical access to healthcare is an issue for many Tasmanians. Finally, 'Building the health workforce' is crucial because we know that Tasmanians in regional and rural areas have poorer access to healthcare and, partly as a result, tend to have poorer health outcomes than their urban peers.

We have some concerns about one of the ambitions, 'Delivering the health infrastructure of the future.' Our concern regarding this relates to increasing use of digital technologies to deliver healthcare, because we know that thousands of Tasmanians struggle with digital access, affordability, and/or skills. Consultations conducted by TasCOSS with Tasmanian community members found a range of barriers to accessing services online:

- Cost of devices
- Cost of data
- Lack of digital knowledge or experience to use an online service
- Difficulties navigating through websites
- Preference for face to face services.

For some Tasmanians, these barriers will not be removed or reduced any time soon, so it is crucial that the design and implementation of changes to health service delivery always retain a face to face option and that these barriers to service access are kept top of mind in design and implementation of any digital service.

Finally we wish to comment on the references in the documents to how data will be used. The health outcomes data projected in 'Drivers of future population health needs' is 'generally based on a continuation of historical trends and assume there will be no change to existing government policies' but neither this document nor the *Advancing Tasmania's Health* document attempt to say what impact current and planned policies and interventions might have nor any specific targets. Monitoring and evaluating is discussed under

'Monitoring progress' in *Advancing Tasmania's Health* but we believe the discussions of population health projections should identify what health outcomes specific programs and interventions are aimed at addressing, alongside targets for improving outcomes in each area. TasCOSS recommends this information be included we believe the next document, the long-term plan for healthcare in Tasmania.

We look forward to responding to the long term plan for healthcare in Tasmania, later this year.

Yours sincerely,



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