

20 June 2022

Our Healthcare Future
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Dear Katherine

FEEDBACK ON ADVANCING OUR HEALTHCARE FUTURE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on *Our Healthcare Future: Advancing Tasmania's Health*. The Our Healthcare Future team is congratulated for recognising and highlighting the vital role of District Hospitals and the associated primary health provision. It is a matter of equality that Tasmanian's no matter where they live, should be supported to access health services. We hear this from our community regularly, they want equitable access to health and social services, and we believe they deserve this.

To support this equity, we suggest *Our Healthcare Future: Advancing Tasmania's Health* include additional actions, specifically:

- The report should clearly articulate the problem with service fragmentation in report areas, with services delivered by multiple providers in a system that does not have sufficient integration. This results in suboptimal service delivery (by part time, or drive-in, drive-out staff) and a lack of connection between service providers.
- Services in remote areas should be integrated and provided as far as possible from collocated facilities. This should include district hospital care and the services funded by Primary Health Tasmania. It should also include other services funded by the State and Commonwealth into remote communities, like dental care, mental health support and social work.
- There is a great need for support for people in remote areas to navigate the health system. The report should outline a clear pathway to provide a one-stop shop service in remote areas that assists people in understanding and navigating healthcare service provision. There is a clear rationale to do this in remote areas as travel and time to access many services is greater and therefore there is a greater need for service coordination.
- There should be greater articulation of programs to attract and retain medical and health staff in remote areas. It is clear that housing is one of the key barriers to this and the report should highlight the need for significant investment in building housing for health staff in remote communities. Ideally this would be done through a single organisation in the state as the problem is not just for health staff, but for staffing across State Government Departments.

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- There is a need for innovative approaches to retention. We have seen that medical and health workers are attracted to sites that offer training and development opportunities. Therefore, we believe that the report should highlight the need for trials of service, training and learning hubs in remote areas. These could be based around district hospitals and would support retention of the health workforce and improve service delivery. The West Coast is ideally suited for a trial of this proposal.

Yours Sincerely



Shane Pitt

MAYOR

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