

# System Support Services

A new governance framework has been developed for the Department of Health and Human Services. It will help the Agency better deliver high quality care and support to patients and clients within the resources available. For more information, read the [‘New Governance Framework’ fact sheet](#).

At the moment, many support services are provided centrally for business units within the Department of Health and Human Services. Examples include payroll, elements of finance and human resources.

Under the new Governance Framework, System Support Services will be established to provide services to the Ministry (the funder), the Purchasing Commissioner and Service Providers.

System Support Services will have a strong customer focus and operate with a more commercial approach to ensure it provides efficient and quality services.

They will include:

- human resource management
  - payroll
  - standardised documentation (contracts and forms) and
  - superannuation administration.
- financial accounting services
- audit and
- contract management and procurement support services.

Information technology will remain within the Ministry for a transitional period and report directly to the Secretary. In the long-term, this function will form part of System Support Services.

System Support Services will have a more commercial and strategic focus than the current Business Support Network.

## **Why are these changes being made?**

Across Australia, fundamental changes are being made to the way health and hospital services are funded, delivered and structured. Tasmania has until 1 July 2012 to put some key changes in place, including establishment of the Tasmanian Health Organisations (currently Area Health Services).

At the same time, we are facing significant budget challenges across the Agency and across government which mean we have to change the way we do business. We've already seen areas including Housing Tasmania, Children and Youth Services, and Disability and Community Services take steps towards meeting these challenges by adopting the purchaser/provider approach.

The Department of Health and Human Services needs more efficient and effective structures to support these changes so we can continue to deliver high quality care and support to Tasmanians with the resources we have. It makes sense to make sure new structures benefit all areas of our Agency, not just those facing major reform in the next six months.

### **What impact will the changes have?**

System Support Services will provide services to the Ministry as well as to Service Providers.

It will establish explicit contracts with those that it provides services to. It will have a customer service charter to make clear its commitments to its customers. It will operate as if it is a contestable market entity.

Given that Tasmanian Health Organisations (THOs) will be the major users of the System Support Services, it is logical to provide significant control of the System Support Services to the THOs and other service providers.

These changes will provide an opportunity to rationalise and streamline processes, particularly in the areas of IT services and HR payroll, personnel and systems and give service providers stronger control over many of the cost drivers in their organisations.

### **How will the changes be implemented?**

The [functional outline](#) will be used as the basis for developing a revised organisational structure and will be finalised by the end of 2011 and released early in 2012.

The System Support Services reforms will be progressed in conjunction with the THO transition period. With the move to pay THOs on an efficient price basis, it is appropriate that improving efficiency within System Support Services occur at the same pace.