



# TASMANIA'S HEALTH PLAN

## Improving transport and accommodation

### The Non-Emergency Community Transport project

The Non-emergency Community Transport project aims to establish centrally coordinated community transport networks to help eligible people attend scheduled, non-emergency health-related services where other transport options are not available.

#### How will Tasmanians benefit?

Improving community transport will help give Tasmanians better access to the health services they need.

This project will ensure a door-to-door service is available for eligible people who are 'transport disadvantaged', including:

- Those who have ongoing mobility problems due to their level of functional disability.
- Those who cannot access transport due to their socioeconomic circumstances.
- Those who cannot access public or private transport.

#### What has been happening?

- 'Mapping' of existing services and resources.
- Wide stakeholder consultation (ongoing).
- Results will inform development of statewide service model.
- There will be ongoing review and evaluation of goals to meet community needs.

### Improving hospital-related transport services

Tasmania's Health Plan commits to better patient access to hospital services by reviewing and improving all ambulance, medical retrieval and patient transport services – as well as financial assistance schemes relevant to health-related travel.

#### How will Tasmanians benefit?

- Better access to a wider range of transport options.
- In many cases, less out-of-pocket expense.
- Better, more efficient coordination of transport services (including to link in with outpatient clinics and hospital discharge times).
- More patients being able to travel for specialist treatment.



## What has been happening?

- Stocktake of existing services.
- Identification of inefficiencies and shortfalls (ongoing).
- Review of emergency medical retrieval services (where critically ill patients are transferred between hospitals, generally by air ambulance).
- Review of Patient Travel Assistance Scheme (PTAS) underway. (PTAS provides financial support to eligible people needing to travel and stay away from home for treatment). Includes workshops.
- Evaluation of an IT program for possible use in centralising coordination of community and non-urgent hospital transport services (ongoing).
- Consultation with stakeholders, including volunteer organisations (ongoing).

## Improving accommodation services near hospitals

Tasmania's Health Plan acknowledges the difficulties many patients face in accessing health services because of issues including the long distances they need to travel. It acknowledges the role of better accommodation options in improving access for these patients.

The Plan commits to a review of accommodation options for patients and their families/carers near Tasmania's three major public hospitals in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie and investment in additional accommodation services.

## How will Tasmanians benefit?

- Better access to a wider range of low-cost accommodation near the major hospitals.
- Better access to information about low-cost accommodation options.
- In many cases, less out-of-pocket expense.
- An alternative to an overnight hospital stay for some patients.

## What has been happening?

- Review of Patient Travel Assistance Scheme (PTAS) underway, including a client survey focussing on accommodation.
- Consideration of new accommodation options, including interstate models (such as 'medi-hotels' – hotel-style accommodation for patients who do not need 24-hour nursing care).
- Stocktake of existing accommodation options and costs.
- Consultation with accommodation providers and organisations with an interest in patient accommodation (ongoing).

## For further information:

Email [future.health@dhhs.tas.gov.au](mailto:future.health@dhhs.tas.gov.au), or leave a message on (03) 6233 3964.

[www.health.tas.gov.au/futurehealth](http://www.health.tas.gov.au/futurehealth)

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