



# TASMANIA'S HEALTH PLAN

## Implementation Newsletter Issue 8, November 2008

### Patient transport commitments announced

Developing integrated transport and accommodation services is one of the central commitments of Tasmania's Health Plan. The promised independent review of patient transport (including urgent, non-urgent and community transport) has been completed and is now publicly available.

Also released is a government response and action plan that promises major improvements to this vital element of patient care.

The full text of the independent reviews and Government response is available at

[http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/news\\_and\\_media?a=35914](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/news_and_media?a=35914)

From December, the level of financial assistance available to patients and their carers under the Patient Travel Assistance Scheme (PTAS) will be significantly increased and will be adjusted annually thereafter:

- The accommodation allowance for overnight stays within Tasmania will increase by \$16 dollars to \$46 per night.
- Outside Tasmania, the allowance will jump to \$64 from the current level of \$30 – in some instances doubling similar allowances offered in other states.
- The current 13 cents per kilometre fuel subsidy will increase to 19c/km – making Tasmania a national leader when it comes to subsidising travel for patients.

Eligibility criteria will be expanded to include renal and oncology patients (who usually have to travel three times a week) travelling more than 50 kilometres to the Launceston General Hospital, North West Regional Hospital and Royal Hobart Hospital.

In addition to the PTAS improvements, the State Government will fund immediate improvements to patient accommodation in Hobart, communications and medical retrieval services, including a new centralised communication centre.

Just over \$22 million will be spent over four years by both the State and Federal Governments to implement a number of immediate priorities under the reform package, including:

- new patient transport vehicles;
- upgrades to the Spurr Wing accommodation complex in Launceston;
- purchase of IT infrastructure for the Communications Centre to improve the coordination of patient transport;

- upgrades to Queenstown Airport;
- purchase of patient transfer and lifting equipment for Wynyard Airport; and
- the purchase of Telehealth equipment for regional and remote health centres.

### Hospital site visits for Tasmania's Health Plan Consumer Representatives

Tasmania's Health Plan Consumer Representatives were recently given a tour of our major acute hospitals. These meetings are part of the on-going commitment to consumer engagement under Tasmania's Health Plan.



**From left to right:** Don Burton (Royal Hobart Hospital) with David Parker, Linley Grant and Debra Carnes.



**From left to right:** Norm Britton, Marjorie Jones, Matt Tidswell with Paula Hyland (North West Regional Hospital).

Tasmania's Health Plan Consumer Representatives were later joined by hospital consumer representatives to share experiences and discuss issues affecting the Tasmanian health system.

In the North, the Launceston General Hospital CEO, John Kirwan, also joined the group for a frank discussion of the opportunities and challenges ahead.

## Tasmania's Health Plan Project Management Workshops

Kathy Kuryl, from the Inter Agency Policy and Projects Unit within the Department of Premier and Cabinet, recently provided professional development sessions to staff engaged in implementing Tasmania's Health Plan.



Kathy Kuryl delivering project management workshops in Burnie.

Kathy has responsibility for the Better Practice Program and extensive experience in promoting and supporting the use of better practice in project management based on the Tasmanian Government Project Management Guidelines.

This was the first time that Departmental staff had the opportunity to come together to discuss progress in implementing Tasmania's Health Plan.

The sessions provided an opportunity for staff to network across the program and learn from each other.

It was also a great opportunity for everyone to understand how crucial they all are in delivering on the commitments within Tasmania's Health Plan.

Staff provided valuable feedback on the workshops, which will be used to plan future information sessions.

More information on project management is available at [www.egovernment.tas.gov.au](http://www.egovernment.tas.gov.au)

## Community Forum Report available now

The last edition of the Implementation Newsletter featured some photos from the September-October Community Forums. You can now access the whole of the report at [http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/3581/6/Oct08\\_THP\\_Community\\_Forums\\_Report.pdf](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/3581/6/Oct08_THP_Community_Forums_Report.pdf)

## Tasmanian Strategy for Chronic Disease Stakeholder Workshops

A series of stakeholder workshops have been held as a part of the development of a new Tasmanian Strategy for Chronic Disease. Anyone with an interest in chronic disease prevention and management was welcome to attend, including clinicians, general practice, private service providers, community organisations, peak bodies, non-government organisations, researchers and consumers.

The stakeholder workshops were a great success, with well over 100 people participating from across the state. Participants generated a wealth of information and advice for the policy team to consider and build into the new strategy.

A highlight of the workshops was presentations delivered by Bev Pinkett and Tracey Klippel who spoke about what it is like to live with chronic disease.

Associate Professor Maarten Kamp from the Clinical Practice Improvement Centre in Queensland also provided valuable insight into how the health system and broader community might respond to the increasing prevalence of chronic disease, or as Maarten put it, "the climate change of the health system."

A full report on the outcomes of the stakeholder workshops will be released on the DHHS website shortly. A draft version of the Tasmanian Strategy for Chronic Disease is also soon to be released for comment. The official launch of the strategy is planned for January 2009.

For copies of these documents, or to keep up to date with the strategy's development, simply email [chronicdisease.strategy@dhhs.tas.gov.au](mailto:chronicdisease.strategy@dhhs.tas.gov.au) and ask to join the project's 'Virtual Network' of stakeholders.



Participants at the Tasmanian Chronic Disease Strategy Stakeholder Workshop held for Launceston General Hospital staff on Wednesday 12 November 2008.

## More information

You can also find out more about Tasmania's Health Plan.

- visit [www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/thp](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/thp)
- email [future.health@dhhs.tas.gov.au](mailto:future.health@dhhs.tas.gov.au)
- call 6233 3964