A Thriving Tasmania

Tasmanian Government Response to the Final Report of the Ministerial Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council

Department of Health and Human Services
# Contents

Foreword ............................................................................................................................................................................ 4
Introduction ........................................................................................................................................................................ 6
  Background ..................................................................................................................................................................... 6
  The Advisory Council’s Final Report ....................................................................................................................... 7
Our Approach to Tackling Inequities ........................................................................................................................... 9
  The Facts ......................................................................................................................................................................... 9
  Tasmanian Government Policy Framework ......................................................................................................... 10
  A Healthy Tasmania ................................................................................................................................................... 11
  A Focus on Place ......................................................................................................................................................... 12
The Advisory Council’s Recommendations .............................................................................................................. 13
  Place-Based Action ..................................................................................................................................................... 13
  Statewide Action ......................................................................................................................................................... 17
  Evidence-Based Action .............................................................................................................................................. 23
  Thrive Tasmania Model .......................................................................................................................................... 27
Where to From Here? ................................................................................................................................................... 28
Appendices ........................................................................................................................................................................ 30
  Appendix 1. Thrive Tasmania Community-Driven Model of Health and Wellbeing ................................... 30
  Appendix 2. Ministerial Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council Recommendations .................................... 31
Foreword

The Tasmanian Government welcomes the Advisory Council’s final report of the Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council as an important opportunity to further the prevention agenda in Tasmania and the focus on the social determinants of health. The final report will help to increase knowledge and understanding across government about the causes and consequences of health including outcomes and inequities, as well as how to practically address them.

The issues and ideas presented by the Advisory Council deliberately build on existing strengths and draw on contemporary solutions and the best available evidence. The Advisory Council’s findings and recommendations confirm what many working in the public sector, both inside and outside of government, believe needs to be done for more Tasmanians to have healthy, productive and fulfilling lives. Greater investment in prevention, stronger leadership, a focus on place and more effective collaboration across sectors is needed. The Tasmanian Government has begun to pursue these opportunities, and has some demonstrable successes that have been assessed but there is always more that can be done.

The Advisory Council’s final report presents the Tasmanian Government with an opportunity as well as a complex challenge. Addressing the social determinants of health and health inequities is no easy task. While public health researchers and practitioners have clearly demonstrated the need to address these issues, implementation strategies are still developmental and substantive evidence of success is contested.

A focus on health inequities requires new and different responses to complexity and systems and must acknowledge the fact that all sectors have an impact on health and its determinants. This challenge is being considered more broadly amongst policy makers working in government agencies nationally and internationally. While approaches are still emerging in Tasmania, there is a current commitment and interest across sectors to improving the productivity and health of people and communities.

Some of the Advisory Council’s recommendations can be achieved in the short to medium term, such as the establishment of a State Public Health Plan, community indicators and health equity impact assessment; others will require a more long-term, sustained effort and the investment of additional resources. In particular, investment in the Thrive Tasmania Community-Driven Model of Health and Wellbeing provides the foundation for a long-term vision for prevention in Tasmania that needs to be built up over a number of years.

This response highlights examples of work underway across government and what more can be done both now and in the future to improve the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians. By working in partnership with schools, workplaces, councils, community-based organisations and others the Tasmanian Government is already promoting good health and wellbeing to thousands of Tasmanians and helping to foster the right conditions for them to achieve good health in the first place. By investing further in these collaborative, “on the ground” approaches, government can help communities themselves to identify and address their own needs.

---

In considering the Advisory Council's findings, it is important not to overlook some of the more fundamental government roles in providing for community health and wellbeing. Protective activities, such as maintaining environmental health standards in terms of food, water and air quality as well as managing risks to public health such as immunisation are part of the core public investment to maintain population health services. There is a need to continue to support these activities in the face of an increased need and focus on the prevention of chronic conditions, such as diabetes and obesity, as is the focus of the Advisory Council’s report.
Introduction

Background

The Tasmanian Government has significantly raised awareness of the need to improve health and focus on the social determinants of health in recent years. In successive State of Public Health Reports released since 2003, the Director of Public Health has raised community awareness of the relationship between the health outcomes of Tasmanians and the social and economic conditions they face. It is now broadly understood that inequities in access, capability and opportunity in life are likely to result in poorer health and greater difficulty in living with chronic diseases or conditions.

With greater understanding comes greater opportunity. There has been a real and observable shift in Tasmanian Government commitment to prevent and protect the population against the consequences of avoidable health inequities. For example, the Tasmania Health Plan 2007 recognised the need to integrate healthy lifestyles programs into community-based health services in order to better meet the changing needs of the Tasmanian population. More recently, Child and Family Centres have sought to intervene early to improve health and education outcomes for children, families and communities.

In 2010 the Minister for Health, the Hon. Michelle O’Byrne MP initiated the Fair and Healthy Tasmania Strategic Review to directly explore the social determinants of health in Tasmania. The review followed the release of Closing the Gap in a Generation – a ground breaking publication by the World Health Organization’s Commission on the Social Determinants of Health that has influenced government approaches to population health around the world.

The Fair and Healthy Tasmania Strategic Review embraced the findings of Closing the Gap in a Generation and called for a combination of leadership across sectors and place-based approaches to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequities amongst Tasmanians.

In response to the Fair and Healthy Tasmania Strategic Review the Tasmanian Government released A Healthy Tasmania: Setting New Directions for Health and Wellbeing and established a Ministerial Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council. A Healthy Tasmania represents the Tasmanian Government’s long-term commitment to building good health and wellbeing in collaboration with communities. It identifies six strategic directions and associated actions for guiding preventive healthcare in Tasmania. The Ministerial Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council (the Advisory Council) was established at the same time to provide further advice from outside the healthcare sector on the best ways to move a social determinants of health agenda forward.

The Advisory Council are a group of independent leaders drawn from different sectors of the Tasmanian community. Members developed and delivered their advice to the Tasmanian Government over a two year period from 2012 to 2013. An interim report with preliminary recommendations was delivered in
2012, followed by a final report and recommendations in 2013. During their sitting term, the Advisory Council completed a substantial analysis of existing health and wellbeing activities in Tasmania, considered an extensive evidence-base on the social determinants of health, and consulted broadly with public health experts and the Tasmanian community. The final report represents the culmination of these efforts and is gratefully received by the Tasmanian Government.

The Advisory Council's Final Report

The Advisory Council delivered A Thriving Tasmania: Final Report of the Ministerial Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council to the Tasmanian Government in November 2013. The Advisory Council's final report rightfully acknowledges that a lot of good work is already underway in Tasmania to protect and promote the health and wellbeing of the population. It also identifies the characteristics of the most effective policies for reducing health inequities and their social and economic benefits.

The Advisory Council has identified a number of areas where further work is needed and calls for urgent action to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequity in Tasmania:

“The Advisory Council recognises the factors supporting healthy people and communities are the social determinants of health – the conditions of daily living in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. Tackling the social determinants demands action across all sectors that influence these conditions. Success will be achieved by a coordinated, sustained and systematic commitment to build the conditions for all Tasmanians to be healthy and well.”

(Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council, 2013, p. 33)

A significant area of opportunity identified by the Advisory Council is the need for greater leadership and coordination for prevention and intersectoral action on the social determinants of health. Despite the good work underway, the Advisory Council found the absence of an overarching plan for prevention and coordinated action on the social determinants of health to be a barrier to progress. Other important areas of opportunity include health intelligence and health equity impact assessment to improve capacity for understanding, planning and evaluating prevention activities in Tasmania.

Benefits of Reducing Health Inequities

- Saves lives
- Boosts economic productivity and employment
- Reduces healthcare costs
- Lifts educational attainment
- Enhances health and wellbeing
- Improves material circumstances
- Reduces illness and disability.

Saves lives
Boosts economic productivity and employment
Reduces healthcare costs
Lifts educational attainment
Enhances health and wellbeing
Improves material circumstances
Reduces illness and disability.
The Advisory Council’s final report recommends a prevention system for Tasmania that builds leadership at a local, state and national level to help influence the political, economic and social factors that shape health and equity. The Advisory Council also identified three main components for this prevention system - place-based action, statewide action and evidence-based action – and priorities for action within each. Copies of the Advisory Council’s final report are available for download from the Department of Health and Human Services’ website: www.dhhs.tas.gov.au.

At the heart of this prevention system is Thrive Tasmania, a community-driven model of health and wellbeing to help communities and their governments identify, prioritise, action and evaluate their own needs (see Appendix 1). Thrive Tasmania is the Advisory Council’s vision for prevention at the local level.
Our Approach to Tackling Inequities

The Facts

The evidence is clear. Inequity is one of the biggest social, economic and political challenges of our time. Inequity harms the economy, social conditions and people’s health and wellbeing. There is much to be gained by reducing inequity and protecting populations from its consequences:

- **Economic costs**: Inequity weakens economies and impedes economic growth. Reliance on a small part of the population builds vulnerability into economic systems.

- **Social costs**: Inequity diminishes daily living conditions, human capital and social cohesion, each of which is required for a flourishing and secure society.

- **Health costs**: Inequity damages people’s sense of self and prevents access to the resources and opportunities necessary for health and wellbeing.

Inequities in income and wealth have widened in many countries, including Australia. These growing financial and social inequities are accompanied by widening inequities in health and wellbeing. Health inequities are differences in health that are unnecessary, avoidable and unfair. For example:

- Since 1975, the wages of a full-time, non-managerial worker in Australia in the bottom ten per cent of income earners has risen by 15 per cent (from $32,000 to $37,000). Whereas for a worker in the 90th percentile their wages have risen by 59 per cent ($65,000 to $103,000).

- Housing stress among low income earners is increasing in Australia and 36.8 per cent of males and 33.8 per cent of females in low income households are living in housing stress (defined as living in accommodation where over 30 per cent of income is spent on rent).

- There has been growth in job insecurity and precarious employment arrangements (such as temporary work, part-time work, informal work and piece work), leading to increasingly less job control among those in work.

- Unemployment benefits in Australia have declined steadily compared to other benefits and to community standards regarding costs of living.

- Generally, people at the bottom of the income distribution have worse health outcomes than those in the middle that in turn have worse health outcomes than those at the top. This ‘social gradient in health’ is seen for a number of health outcomes including depression, heart disease and cancer.

While it is clear that poor health can lead to lower income, there is solid evidence that poor health occurs as a consequence of the social gradient. Poor health is both a cause and

---

8 Ibid.
a consequence of social and economic disadvantage.\textsuperscript{10}

By examining health inequity in terms of the social gradient it becomes clear that not only does poverty and disadvantage affect health and wellbeing, but so do the basic social and economic conditions that affect everyone. This is a major issue for all Tasmanians.

**Tasmanian Government Policy Framework**

The Tasmanian Government acknowledges the value of working together to meet the challenges faced by many. Complex social and economic problems, such as literacy, climate change and homelessness require not only a whole-of-government, but a whole-of-community response. The Tasmanian Government aims to increase intersectoral collaboration in line with the Advisory Council’s recommendations and has taken a number of steps to achieve this.

The Tasmanian Government’s 2013-2014 Policy Framework of Jobs, People and Opportunities is about giving all Tasmanians the opportunity to get a job and build a better life. This Policy Framework sets the Tasmanian Government’s higher order priorities against which policies, programs and initiatives can be guided. It strongly reflects the Advisory Council’s focus on health inequity and a social determinants of health agenda. The Policy Framework identifies three priorities:

- Modernising the economy – it’s all about jobs
- Reducing inequality – caring for people
- Investing in the next generation – generating new opportunities for our kids

Each of these priority areas will help to improve the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians. Examples of actions that are currently being taken right now across these areas include: the First Home Builders Boost to help Tasmanians build new homes; participating in the National Disability Insurance Scheme launch to provide greater choice and control for Tasmanians with a disability; and backing the Gonski education reforms to deliver needs based funding to Tasmanian schools.

The Tasmanian Government Policy Framework demonstrates the Tasmanian Government’s firm commitment to reducing inequality in Tasmania. It is complemented by two further whole-of-government projects designed to support collaborative, evidence-based decision making: The Collaboration Approach and Stats Matter. Together, these three initiatives are working to improve the basic conditions that underpin health and wellbeing for all Tasmanians.

**Stats Matter**

Stats Matters is a long term strategy to strengthen the Tasmanian Government’s statistical assets and capability to enhance decision making – it is about the government and community making effective decisions based on sound statistical advice.

A Healthy Tasmania

*A Healthy Tasmania: Setting New Directions for Health and Wellbeing* is a long-term approach for building good health and wellbeing in collaboration with communities. It identifies the Tasmanian Government’s directions for preventive health.

*A Healthy Tasmania* is a commitment by the Tasmanian Government to realise the vision of a fair and healthy Tasmania by:

- Establishing a coordinated and comprehensive approach to health and wellbeing across government and community, by building collaborative partnerships with communities, and the government, non-government and private sectors;
- Addressing health inequity by targeting efforts to support the most vulnerable Tasmanians and addressing the social factors that determine health and wellbeing outcomes; and
- Empowering people and communities to improve their wellbeing, by bringing together all that is known and assessing the impact of the activities of all sectors on health and social outcomes.

The social determinants of health are recognised and prioritised in *A Healthy Tasmania*. It is the conditions in which people live, learn, work and play that determine their health and wellbeing - much more than what individuals do or how healthcare services respond. It is estimated that medical care accounts for only 10% of overall health, with social, environmental and behavioural factors accounting for the rest.\(^1\) At the heart of *A Healthy Tasmania* is the notion that getting people to maintain their own wellbeing is part – not all – of the solution.

---

A Focus on Place

International evidence shows there is a strong link between people’s health and the conditions in which they live. People with poorer health outcomes tend to be concentrated in disadvantaged areas and are lower down the social gradient, with health inequities closely following this gradient.

This suggests that locality, community or place-specific approaches that promote capability will be best. Place-based approaches accept that local knowledge of the social, cultural and institutional context of communities is central to improving the health and wellbeing of its residents.

A focus on place can also help to drive the collaboration across government that is needed to solve complex social and economic problems. In places where multiple and complex issues exist, multiple agencies and community members can combine in a collaborative process, to work towards making a difference.

The Tasmanian Government has already begun to invest in place-based approaches to health and wellbeing and will continue to build on this in 2014. Place-based approaches are happening in communities throughout Tasmania in partnership with Child and Family Centres, arts and cultural groups, schools, clubs, local councils, Community Health Centres and other community-based organisations.

Tasmania’s 34 Community and Neighbourhood Houses are delivering support programs at a local level to build the strength and resilience of individuals, families and communities. In 2013 the Tasmanian Government allocated funding of $4.0 million over two years to expand the current capital and maintenance program statewide for Community Houses.

A further $580,000 has been invested over two years to 2016 in the Thriving Communities – Healthy Families Project in Community Houses. The project will work locally to involve families and community members in maintaining their own health and in establishing service responses to the specific needs they identify.

Three regional community development family support workers will facilitate community-driven activity aimed at engaging families with young children in building capability and resilience for health and wellbeing over time.

The Tasmanian Government is also a supporting partner in the Tasmania Medicare Local’s Social Determinants of Health and Risk Factors Project. The Project is focusing on improving the health of Tasmanians through addressing the social determinants of health. A range of strategies will be promoted in selected communities across the Tasmania from early 2014 until June 2016.

---

The Advisory Council’s Recommendations

The Advisory Council’s final report recommends three key components for preventive health in Tasmania — place-based action, statewide action and evidence-based action. It also recommends that these components be brought together and consolidated under the Thrive Tasmania model, the Advisory Council’s vision for community health and wellbeing.

What follows is the Tasmanian Government’s response to this model for directing and shaping health and wellbeing in Tasmania. For an indicative list of strategies and timeframes for the Tasmanian Government’s response to the recommendations in the final report, see Appendix 2.

Place-Based Action

The Advisory Council rightly identifies place-based action as an area of opportunity for preventive health in Tasmania. Tasmania is relatively similar to other regional parts of Australia and many people living are affected by social exclusion, unemployment, low education outcomes and poor physical environments with a consequential greater risk of poor health and wellbeing than others. Social and economic factors can also have a negative impact on the wellbeing of individuals and families in any community, even if they are affluent. This makes a focus on place an appropriate response to health and wellbeing in all locations in Tasmania.

Challenges and Opportunities

A place-based approach is a method of working that is used to target actions and resources within a particular community or location, in order to better meet the particular needs or issues of that location.

The method is often applied to a ‘wicked’ problem, that is, a public policy issue that has multiple causes and solutions, that involves multiple stakeholders, but has no clear point of leadership or accountability. For this reason, health and wellbeing is often a common focus of place-based approaches. Other examples of wicked problems that place-based approaches attempt to address include poverty, employment and climate change.

A major advantage of place-based approaches is that they can bring together the many stakeholders that are needed to make a real difference within a community. This might include members of government, business and non-government sectors, as well as community members themselves. A community development approach is often taken to draw

---

upon and build the resources that already exist within communities.

One of the challenges of place-based approaches is that they are often very difficult to evaluate due to the long-term nature of outcomes, difficulties in accessing data and difficulties in attributing health and wellbeing outcomes to the interventions because of the number of factors at play within communities.

Experience also shows that place-based approaches are highly dependent on sufficient time and resources for implementation. To be successful, place-based approaches require: strong relationships between stakeholders, community participation, local ownership and leadership, local skills and capacity building, adequate time for outcomes and impact to occur, strong government support, responsiveness to local needs, and strategies for monitoring and evaluation.

Like any intervention targeting the social determinants of health, there is a risk of “lifestyle drift” in place-based approaches. That is, the tendency for the focus to shift from the social determinants to a focus on individual behavior rather than structural change.

Place-based approaches must also be considered within the context of a broader preventive health system that helps shape the conditions of daily living that determine health and wellbeing at a local, state and national level. Other preventive health approaches that complement a place-based approach include: legislation and regulation; taxation and pricing; advocacy; social marketing; settings-based approaches (schools, workplaces, clubs); enhancing built environments; workforce development and training; and surveillance, monitoring and evaluation.

Residing in neighbourhoods of concentrated social disadvantage can have an impact on the health of people in a number of direct and indirect ways, including:

- Lack of access to social networks and job opportunities
- Lack of exposure to the health promoting values and behaviours of broader society
- Prejudice and stigma associated with residing in areas that are perceived as negative and undesirable places
- Decreased access to a range of health, education and community services.

(Larsen, K, 2007)

Tasmanian Government Activity

The Tasmanian Government already provides a range of services and programs with a focus on place. For example:

- Child and Family Centres are places for families with children from birth to five years to access a range of services. Their purpose is to improve the health and wellbeing, education and care of Tasmania’s very young children by supporting parents and enhancing accessibility of services in the local community. By the end of 2013, nine state funded and two commonwealth funded centres have been established in communities around Tasmania. Work has also commenced towards a twelfth centre at George Town.

- Community and neighbourhood houses provide grass roots, place-based services to communities. These facilities support...
education, childcare, community gatherings and healthcare in some of Tasmania’s most disadvantaged and isolated communities.

- **LINC Tasmania** is a statewide network that gives Tasmanians access to library services, research and information, adult literacy support, community learning, online access, and archive and heritage services. LINC Tasmania services are available online and in 69 locations around Tasmania, including LINCS, Branch Libraries and Online Access Centres.

- In schools, breakfast programs and community or kitchen gardens have been established to support children to prepare and eat healthy meals. Programs such as the Young Parents Activity Group and Dads at School Program at Clarendon Vale are encouraging parents to connect with these and other school-based activities.

- The highly successful **Move Well Eat Well Program** is working to promote healthy eating and physical activity as a normal and positive part of every child’s day. Over the past four years, 155 schools have joined the program and one in five has achieved a Move Well Eat Well Award. In 2012, the program was extended from Primary Schools to also include Early Childhood Education and Care Services.

- Schools are responsive to meeting need within the school community by providing programs that support student welfare. These programs include but are not limited to: Positive Behaviour Support, Kids Matter, Mind Matters, Restorative Practice and Program Achieve. Chaplains and/or Student Welfare Workers, School Support Teachers, Student Needs Support Teams, Multi-Disciplinary Learning Services Support Teams and Statewide Support Teams help deliver these programs.

- The **Healthy Workers Initiative** supports workplace-based health programs aimed at reducing overweight and obesity, increasing levels of physical activity and the intake of fruit and vegetables, supporting smoking cessation and reducing harmful levels of alcohol consumption.

- The **Residential Development Strategy** is about delivering better housing and more liveable communities in Tasmania. It applies liveability principles and best-practice in urban design to enhance community cohesiveness, provide green public spaces, improve safety and build resilience and energy efficiency into housing design. All tenders for new builds or refurbishment of Housing Tasmania assets must demonstrate adherence to the principles.

- Better Housing Futures is a major new step in the Tasmanian Government’s reform of the social housing sector to establish more accessible and responsive services for tenants. Up to 4,000 public housing tenancies (or about 35% of public housing stock) is being transferred to the community housing sector. Community housing organisations will be based in the community, making access easier for
tenants. The focus of Better Housing Futures is to deliver a sustainable and place-based approach in broad acre estates to improve property upgrades and access to housing help. Community engagement is central to the success of the project and achievement of project outcomes. The first stage started in early 2012 with the release of about 500 homes at Clarendon Vale and Rokeby. Stage 2 will see a further 1,100 homes handed over in suburbs across Tasmania in 2014.

- Recent reforms to the Tasmanian disability sectors have included the outsourcing of all disability services to the community sector and the establishment of Gateway services, locally-based information, referral, intake and assessment agencies. The new service model aims to improve choices for people with disability and provide services that are more closely aligned to the communities in which they are situated.

- Inter-Agency Support Teams (IASTs) operate in locations across the state to support children and young people with complex needs and their families. IAST participants are generally at risk of entering the criminal justice system. The IAST Plus Project is currently considering how a multi-agency approach can best achieve positive outcomes for families.

- Police and Community Youth Clubs (PCYC) are located in communities throughout Tasmania. They provide a broad range of sporting, recreation, social and cultural programs in a safe environment primarily for ‘at risk’ youth.

- The Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service is encouraging more visits to parks and gardens through the Healthy Parks Healthy People program. This integrated, multi-disciplinary and collaborative approach acknowledges the link between nature and health. A range of events and activities are promoted to exalt the benefits of natural resources.

**Next Steps**

The Tasmanian Government has already begun to invest in place-based approaches, however, much more needs to be done if Tasmanians are to fully reap the benefits of this way of working. While there are lots of activities happening at a local or community in Tasmania, better coordination and a shared understanding and agreement is needed to bring all of this together.

A first step will be to consolidate the knowledge and experience that already exists within government and non-government sectors on place-based approaches. Child and Family Centres and many community sector organisations, for example, have been working in this way for several years. There is a need to better evaluate these existing programs to learn what is making a difference in Tasmanian communities. In the next year, both Tasmania Medicare Local and the Tasmanian Association of Community Houses are embarking on place-based approaches to health and wellbeing that will provide invaluable learning for Tasmania.
The University of Tasmania is a partner in the evaluation of these approaches together with Population Health Services as these organisations establish a proof of concept.

Another important step will be to pursue a commitment across government agencies to adopt place as a focus for economic and social improvement and to establish the principles and goals for working. A genuine commitment and buy-in from all government agencies will be essential to furthering productivity and healthy fulfilling lives for Tasmanians. This will require the development of practical resources and a shared language to guide both government and non-government stakeholders in adopting the approach.

A major opportunity in the next year will be the new Tasmanian Government Framework for Community Engagement, which aims to support better community engagement practices, coordination and information sharing, and improved community participation in decision-making to achieve better outcomes for communities and government. Under the framework a number of initiatives are being implemented in 2014, such as networking and learning opportunities for government staff on best practice engagement, a register of public consultations to support better coordination of Tasmanian Government-led engagement activities, and development of a website to promote these activities and encourage community participation. These practical resources will help guide the implementation of place-based approaches at a local or community level.

Statewide Action

The need to bring statewide coordination and consistency to prevention activity in Tasmania emerged as a clear theme in a number of the Advisory Council’s publications, including the final report. This is unsurprising, given that evidence has consistently shown that preventive health effort requires a “broad, multifaceted and coordinated strategy over a sustained period with partnerships between health and other portfolios and industry sectors, and between government, business and community groups to succeed.”14

The history of preventive health action to reduce tobacco smoking in Australia provides the perfect example of the strength of coordinated, systemic action. In tobacco control, a multifaceted, comprehensive set of actions have been taken including public education, taxation, legislation, quit smoking support services, regulation, monitoring, research and evaluation. This has led to a marked drop in the nation’s smoking rates over the last 30 years. Taking this type of systematic approach to preventive health more broadly will help to foster the conditions that will support people to healthy and well in the first place.

Challenges and Opportunities

High level policy support, coordination and leadership are key elements of a systematic approach to preventive health. These elements help to support the design and delivery of more effective interventions.

Another essential part of delivering high quality preventive health outcomes are partnerships with non-government organisations, community and industry.\textsuperscript{15} Partnerships can help to target interventions at the needs of particular groups or to deliver prevention activities in common settings such as schools and workplaces. Connections between preventive health and the broader health sector are also required.

Changes in populations take time and a major barrier to systemic public health action is overcoming government structures and budget cycles. Government departments, by their very structure, are separated with different responsibilities and accountabilities, making it more difficult to establish effective joint goals across organisations. Government budget cycles are relatively short-term and there is often an expectation that return on investment will be demonstrated quickly.

**Tasmanian Government Activity**

The Tasmanian Government provides statewide strategies and approaches across a number of areas that have an impact on population health and wellbeing. For example:

- A *Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania* recognises that social exclusion contributes to disadvantage and sets out 10 strategies for action. The strategy is about getting the basics right, early intervention and prevention and structural change.
- A *Cost of Living Strategy for Tasmania* is guiding activities to relieve pressures associated with the rising costs of living. The Tasmanian Government has invested $5 million into cost of living initiatives, many of which directly support the social determinants of health:
  - Financial Literacy Exchange Program;
  - Housewarming Program – including the Stay Warm Save Money and Housewarming Boxes and Curtains programs;
  - Wheels for Work and Training Program;
  - Emergency Relief;
  - Emergency Food Relief.
- *Food for All Tasmanians: A Food Security Strategy* identifies key strategies for increasing access to affordable and nutrition food for all Tasmanians, particularly those most at risk. Under the strategy the Tasmanian Government has invested $1 million in 2012-2013 food security related activities, including grants to coalition of organisations to support community gardens and integrated food skills, access and affordability programs.
- The Premier’s Physical Activity Council, together with the *Tasmanian Plan for Physical Activity 2011-2012*, provides coordination and statewide leadership for initiatives and programs designed to promote and provide opportunities for physical activity. Key priority areas are to influence the built environment to support healthy and active lifestyles in Tasmania by addressing community design, policy and transport planning.

• Sport and Recreation Tasmania works in partnership with a range of organisations statewide, including local government, national, state and local sporting organisations and other providers to support all Tasmanians to participate in sport, recreation and physical activity. A strong focus is placed on ensuring there are well-planned facilities, places and environments for people to participate. The recent $4 million Trails and Bikeways Program has resulted in over $10.4 million in trail and bikeway infrastructure around the state.

• Tasmania police provides a number of diversion options across Tasmania that enable offenders who commit a range of offences to be dealt with aside from the criminal justice system. These programs provide a restorative justice approach and seek to promote better outcomes for the individuals involved. For example the Illicit Drug Diversion Initiative and the Tasmanian Early Intervention Pilot Program are referring minor drug and alcohol offenders to health-based initiatives.

• The Economic Development Plan provides a basis for the next ten years to deliver increased economic growth, jobs and a better, more equitable and sustainable future for Tasmanians. The plan centers on making the most of Tasmania’s assets to secure prosperity and jobs.

• The Tasmanian Jobs Package is working to provide all Tasmanians with the opportunity to get a job and build a better life. Under the package:
  - Tasmanians will be able to achieve their dream of building their first new home with a $15,000 First Home Builders Grant
  - Businesses will receive a Full Payroll Tax Rebate for all new jobs created in Tasmania
  - Small businesses can access grants of up to $250,000 to help them expand and create jobs in Tasmania
  - Communities will benefit from an investment of $6 million for community and recreation infrastructure
    - Tourisme operators will benefit from an additional $1 million to promote Tasmania
    - Farmers will get support to tap into the dairy boom through a $400,000 dairy conversion program.

• The Tasmanian Adult Literacy Action Plan 2010-2015 invests in people and programs to raise awareness and understanding of adult literacy. It provides support and programs for people to improve adult literacy in their workplace and their community.

• The 26TEN Grants Program aims to increase the core skills levels of people in the workplace and communities, to build a culture of life-long learning and to make it easier for employees and community groups to access literacy support.
The Tasmanian Skills Strategy 2008-2015 seeks to guide investment to match Tasmania’s skills needs. Investment is targeted at the 400,000 Tasmanians over the age of 15 years that make up the state’s working age population. The strategy has four themes:
- Increasing opportunity;
- A better system for clients;
- Workforce development;
- Skills for the future.

The Inclusive Ageing: Tasmania 2012-2014 Strategy represents a commitment by the Tasmanian Government to support a socially inclusive society in the context of an ageing population. The strategy is being implemented through six inter-related projects based on themes which emerged from statewide consultation:
- Building evidence: a demographic profile (of older Tasmanians);
- Finding out: accessing the right information at the right time;
- Supporting resourcefulness: living affordability;
- Engaging in different ways: voluntary contributions;
- Improving access: age-friendly communities;
- Contributing economically: workforce participation.

A statewide approach to relationships and sexuality education in all government schools from kindergarten to Grade 12 ensure all young people are provided with inclusive and appropriate education and support:
- Guidelines for Sexual and Gender Diversity in Schools and Colleges are a commitment to ensure the education experience for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex students is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying;
- Guidelines for Inclusive Language ensures employees and students are aware of their responsibility to use inclusive language, to acknowledge and treat all people equitably with sensitivity and respect;
- The Relationship and Sexuality Education in Tasmanian Government Schools Strategy supports schools to deliver development-appropriate relationships and sexual education.

The Tasmanian Urban Passenger Transport Framework sets the future direction for passenger transport across Tasmania’s urban areas. The Framework identifies six action areas:
- Moving Minds – increasing public awareness, acceptance and usage of public transport, walking and cycling options;
- Moving Places – consolidation of population around transit corridors, proving the critical population density to support future mass transit systems;
- Moving People – high frequency public transport delivered with high quality infrastructure that enhances attractiveness, efficiency and utility of public transport;
- Moving Policies – encouraging use of alternatives to private vehicles;
- **Moving Legs** – Encouraging walking and cycling through infrastructure, land use planning and behavioural change.
- **Moving Forward** – Adopting a long-term approach to integrated use of transport and planning.

*Similarly, the Tasmanian Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy aims to make communities healthier, and more sustainable, liveable and accessible by supporting people to walk and cycle as part of their every-day journeys. Principal Urban Cycling networks have been identified in each major urban centre and are being supported by cycling infrastructure on key active transport routes.*

*Tasmania is a signatory of the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010-2022. A key action of the Tasmanian Implementation Plan has been the development of a primary prevention strategy entitled Taking Action: Tasmania’s Primary Prevention Strategy to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children 2012-2022.*

*Tasmania’s objectives are to:*
- Foster an intolerance of violence in Tasmania through a range of strategies;
- Use evidence-based best practice programs to build people’s capacity to develop respectful relationships;
- Participate in national approaches;
- Strengthen collaboration between government and non-government services to ensure services meet the needs of clients.*

*Arts Tasmania is a part of the National Arts and Health Working Group which has supported the development of the National Arts and Health Framework. The framework has been developed to enhance the profile of arts and health in Australia and to promote greater integration of arts and health practice and approaches into health promotion, services, settings and facilities.*

*The Better Access to Government Services for Humanitarian Refugee Entrants Report is a whole-of-government approach to improving access to Tasmanian Government services for former humanitarian entrants. The report recognises there are often significant challenges that need to be addressed to enable equitable access to government services and outcomes for former humanitarian entrants. New initiatives and adjustments to existing programs are being overseen by and Interagency Working Group to meet the needs of former humanitarian entrants.*

*Sharing Responsibility for Our Children, Young People and Families: Government Embracing Change aims to improve policies and service delivery arrangements for children, young people and their families. The agenda sets out key directions for the next 10 years and assists in determining the sort of environment Tasmanians wish their children to grow up in.*

*A Committee of Cabinet on Children, Young People and Their Families has been*
established. Chaired by the Premier, membership comprises of the Attorney General and Ministers for Children, Health, Human Services, Police and Emergency Management, and Education and Skills. It is supported by an Interdepartmental Committee made up of Heads of Agencies.

- **Building the Foundations for Mental Health and Wellbeing: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan for Implementing Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention Approaches** reflects the Tasmanian Government’s ongoing commitment to the delivery of quality mental health services. Its implementation is being driven with the oversight of the Tasmanian Inter-Agency Working Group for Mental Health.

- **Tasmania’s Suicide Prevention Strategy 2010-2014** provides a clear direction for suicide prevention activity in Tasmania. The Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Committee focuses on implementing the strategy’s five priority areas:
  - Governance and leadership
  - Primary prevention;
  - Secondary prevention and early intervention;
  - Tertiary prevention
  - Evaluation and quality improvement of services.

- **The Tasmanian Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention Strategic Framework: Everybody’s Business** has been developed by the Tasmanian Inter-Agency Working Group on Drugs. Everybody’s Business seeks to address the underlying causes of substance use, moving beyond traditional health, justice and education approaches. It focuses on the following priority areas:
  - Nurturing the early years and strengthening families
  - Fostering resilient individuals
  - Building an inclusive community

- Building an integrated service system
- Focusing on whole of population approaches.

- In accordance with the **Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993**, the Tasmanian Planning System works “to secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreation environment for all Tasmanians.” As awareness of the relationship between the built environment and health and wellbeing grows, land use planning is becoming an important strategy for achieving positive community health and wellbeing outcomes.

- The Tasmanian Early Years Foundation is a non-profit organisation to support and promote the wellbeing, development and learning of Tasmanian children up to the age of six years. The foundation is to play a central role in bringing sectors together to help foster a society in which all Tasmanian children are valued and given the best possible start to life.
Next Steps

There is clearly a need for greater consistency, integration and collaboration in government activity at a statewide level in Tasmania. While the Tasmanian Government is responsible for numerous statewide services, programs and planning activities, there is no single overarching plan or body to bring them together.

The public have an expectation of easy access to public services that work coherently together. More needs to be done to define integrated service delivery in Tasmania and how government agencies might support and develop such an approach statewide. Transparency of public services must be at the forefront of any commitment to improve statewide consistency and collaboration.

A next step will be to identify and agree the shared interests at a statewide level that can bring government departments and activities together across portfolios. Agendas such as mental health and suicide, children and young people, climate change and employment are shared by all parts of government and can help foster commitment and practical collaboration strategies across diverse parts of government.

Another important step will be to raise greater understanding and awareness of the interconnectedness of government portfolio areas. As flagged by the Advisory Council, this could be achieved through whole-of-government forums or formal policy assessment processes, such as Health Equity Impact Assessment (see evidence-based action).

The Tasmanian Government Approach to Collaboration remains a major opportunity to drive a preventive health agenda forward, including the Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council’s recommendations. Work on implementation of the approach is ongoing across government.

Evidence-Based Action

Effective preventive health action is dependent on an enabling infrastructure that includes research, monitoring and evaluation, information, a strong workforce and leadership. Without these essential elements, public health practitioners cannot know when, where and how to act.

For this reason, the World Health Organization’s Commission on the Social Determinants of Health identified ‘knowledge, monitoring and skills’ as the ‘backbone of action’ to reduce health inequity.

Building Tasmania’s ‘health intelligence’ capability is perhaps the greatest area of opportunity identified in the Advisory Council’s final report. Increasing the state’s health intelligence, including access to community health and wellbeing profiles and health equity impact assessment, will help to bring sectors and communities together to work on improving health and equity.

---


Challenges and Opportunities

Like the rest of Australia, Tasmania has relatively good access to information on the health status of its citizens. Less is known, however, about the causes or determinants of preventable chronic disease in the population. There are also gaps in knowledge about both health outcomes and their causes at a local government or regional level in Tasmania.

Evaluating the impact of prevention initiatives remains a challenge. There is not enough good evidence of what works in reducing health inequities and influencing underlying causes. Barriers to evaluation include the long-term nature of interventions, lack of dedicated funding for evaluation activities, difficulties attributing causation and sometimes a lack of clear or measurable goals. For these reasons evaluations often tend to focus on descriptions of the problem and on inputs, throughputs and satisfaction levels, rather than health outcomes.

Despite these challenges many opportunities currently exist in Tasmania. Policy makers are beginning to integrate data from across sectors, such as education and health, which will assist to better understand the factors that influence health and wellbeing. Improvements are also being made in the way that data is shared and accessed across government and the community.

Tasmanian Government Activity

The Tasmanian Government is working across agencies to improve collaboration and access to information. For example:

- **Stats Matter** is a long-term strategy to build Tasmanian Government statistical assets and capability. Its vision is for better government decisions informed by quality data and sound statistical practice for the benefit of all Tasmanians. The major actions outlined in the strategy are:
  - To identify and manage statistical assets to strengthen government accountability;
  - To establish a toolkit of resources to build data quality and support capability;
  - To build mechanisms to make sharing and publication of statistical information easier;
  - To strengthen collaboration across government to make the best use of statistical information;
  - To develop and implement a plan to improve Tasmanian Government statistical capability.

---


• The Tasmanian Data Linkage Unit provides the potential to bring together and cross reference a range of health and social data from disparate information sources. The work is delivered through a partnership between the Menzies Research Institute of Tasmania and the Department of Health and Human Services.

• Sense-T is a partnership between the CSIRO and the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts which facilitates the analysis of geospatial data in real time to aid in decision making.

• Kids Come First is a whole-of-government initiative that has established a database of key indicators of the health, wellbeing, safety, development and learning outcomes of Tasmanian children from birth to age 17. In some instances, the database allows analysis of data down to a locality or suburb level.

• Every three years since 2009, Tasmanian children enrolled in the Preparatory year of schooling have participated in the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) data collection. The AEDI is a national population measure of young children’s health and development as they transition into full-time schooling. Both the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education use the data to support young children, their families and the community they live in.

• The Department of Education is currently engaged in a collaborative data linkage project with the South Australian Department of Education and Child Development. This project is using data linkage methodologies to provide a proof of concept searchable dataset of de-identified population-level data that will incorporate available health and education data sets at a unit-record level.

• The Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services have a data sharing Memorandum of Understanding underpinned by a Cross-Agency Partnering Agreement. The Agreement outlines roles, responsibilities and processes that support the collaborative effort required to improve the educational achievements for students under guardianship and custody orders enrolled in government schools.

• The State of Public Health Reports and Health Indicators Tasmania provide detailed statistical information about the health status and determinants of health in our population. These reports are submitted through the Minister for Health to both Houses of Parliament, as required by the Public Health Act 1997 every five years.

Next Steps

While the Tasmanian Government has made good progress in strengthening the evidence-based for preventive health, there is still more to be done. A number of initiatives will help to progress this important area in the next year and beyond.

Community Health and Wellbeing Profiles:
Help local governments to govern better through greater knowledge
Inform local people and organisations about local issues and encourage their engagement
Ensure policy, budget and other decision making is informed by evidence
Illustrate how different issues in communities are connected
Focus service planners on results
Encourage strong government reporting, accountability and transparency.
For example, Web-Epi is a web-based epidemiological reporting system that provides a user-friendly way to analyse the latest data about hospitalisations, cancer incidence, infectious diseases and mortality to identify health trends and outcomes in Tasmania. The Department of Health and Human Services is developing Web-Epi into a publically accessible resource of holistic information on the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians.

The Department of Health and Human Services will also develop community health and wellbeing profiles and indicators to make information about that status and determinants of population health more readily accessible, applicable and useful for communities. This will help to guide preventative health measures at a local or community level, including place-based approaches.

The Department of Health and Human Services is also scoping the development of a health equity impact assessment process for Tasmania. Health equity impact assessment is a type of information tool used to raise awareness of the influence that the activities of all sectors have over the conditions of daily living that affect health. The tool will be trialled internally within Population Health Services in the first instance.

A major opportunity for boosting the leadership and evidence base for preventive health in Tasmania will be the development of a State Public Health Plan for Tasmania in response to the five-yearly State of Public Health Report tabled in the Parliament of Tasmania. The legislative basis for the structure to oversee such an approach already exists within the Public Health Act 1997, with the establishment of a Public Health Advisory Committee being an option for the Minister for Health under Section 37 of the Act. The establishment of such a committee for the purposes of developing a broadly-based State Public Health Plan would be a major undertaking for the Tasmanian Government and would require all government departments to consider their impact on population health and wellbeing.
**Thrive Tasmania Model**

The *Thrive Tasmania* Community Model of Health and Wellbeing presents a fantastic opportunity to the Tasmanian Government. The model has great potential to bring a diverse range of people together within communities around a shared agenda. It offers all parts of government the opportunity to pursue their goals for Tasmanian communities in collaboration with others.

The model already enjoys a high level of support amongst key stakeholders as a result of the Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council’s broad community linkages. This paves the way for the necessary partnerships and collaboration across the Tasmanian community. Advisory Council members have also generously offered to play an ongoing role in bringing together the necessary players to make a difference.

Developing an approach like *Thrive Tasmania* is no small undertaking. In the first instance, further work is needed to develop the practical implementation strategies that will bring the Advisory Council’s vision to life. This will involve development of the *Joint Statement of Commitment to Prevention*, principles and methods for working in *Thrive Tasmania* communities, and tools and resources for working with communities.

The *Thrive Tasmania* brand also needs to be tested with the broader Tasmanian community. *Thrive Tasmania* will only be successful if individuals, families, schools, clubs and other community groups can each develop a sense of shared ownership and commitment to the approach. Communities must therefore have input into the development of the model from its earliest stages. Skillful community engagement will be an essential component of a “thriving community”.

Community support and participation can strongly advantage place-based approaches like the model for *Thrive Tasmania*. Community support helps to mobilise the many resources that community members can bring to policy and decision-making processes and ultimately to service delivery.

Community capacity building must therefore be embedded into all planning and implementation activities towards the *Thrive Tasmania* model in order to create functional and effective systems within communities that will enable community members and groups to fulfil their role in contributing to health outcomes. Participatory and deliberative processes that include both local and external stakeholders in communities will be essential.
Where to From Here?

Tasmania faces the significant challenge of managing rising healthcare costs at a time of tight fiscal circumstances. Modelling indicates that if no action is taken to address rising healthcare costs, healthcare will consume the entire State Budget within the next few decades.

Prevention is a strong priority of the Tasmanian Government, and is strongly supported by clinicians in the healthcare sectors. Prevention improves quality of life for individuals and their families. It also offers the potential to reign in predicted growth in healthcare expenditure, and generates substantial social and economic benefits for the broader community.

As this response illustrates, the Tasmanian Government has invested heavily in preventive health in Tasmania, including the social determinants of health agenda. In line with this commitment, the Tasmanian Government accepts the Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council’s recommendations.

In the coming year, the Tasmanian Government will continue to support place-based approaches, principally through Child and Family Centres, neighbourhood and community houses, LINCS, schools and workplaces. The Thriving Communities – Healthy Families Project and the Tasmanian Government Framework for Community Engagement will pave the way for further development of place-based approaches in Tasmanian communities.

At a statewide level, the Tasmanian Government will continue to pursue greater consistency, integration and collaboration across government activity, particularly through the opportunities that arise under the implementation of Collaboration – A Tasmanian Government Approach.

Improvements to the Tasmanian Government’s statistical capability will continue to be made as a part of the Stats Matters initiative across government. The Department of Health and Human Services is also strengthening its health intelligence capacity through such advancement as the Web-Epi reporting system, community health and wellbeing profiles and indicators and health equity impact assessment.

The development of a State Public Health Plan in response to the five-yearly State of Public Health Reports is a major undertaking that the Tasmanian Government will pursue in 2014. A State of Public Health Plan would bring whole-of-government attention to the important health and wellbeing issues raised by the Director of Public Health in these reports, and encourage a social determinants of health approach in response.

If resources allow, the State Public Health Plan will be overseen by a Public Health Advisory Committee appointed by the Minister for Health under the legislative structure within the Public Health Act 1997. The Public Health Advisory Committee could include senior State Service officers as well as independent public health experts to guide the implementation of a State Public Health Plan. Their role would include regular progress reporting and advice to government.
Appendices

Appendix 1. *Thrive Tasmania* Community-Driven Model of Health and Wellbeing

![Thrive Tasmania Model Diagram]

- **Community decision-making**: Participatory planning processes
- **Priorities**: Partners and resources brought together
- **Local partnerships**: Programs and initiatives
  - Prevention delivered in collaboration

**Local communities**

**Thrive Tasmania programs and initiatives**

**Evidence**
- Local health profiles: Data and knowledge combined
- Community health profiles: Community-driven model of health and wellbeing

**Local partnerships**
- Facilitation
- Enabling resources
- Capacity and skills training
- Citizen juries
- Other engagement techniques

**Local partnerships delivered by**
- All levels of government
- Consumers and community networks
- Community sector
- Businesses
- Health and human services
- Schools
- Tasmania Medicare Local

**Thrive Tasmania programs and initiatives resourced with**
- Toolkits
- Web-based resources
- Training
- Evidence-based programs and resources
- Coaching services
- Criteria-based programs and grant systems
## Appendix 2. Ministerial Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council Recommendations

### 1. Place-Based Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Develop an agreed vision, principles and whole-of-government commitment to <em>Thrive Tasmania</em>.</td>
<td>Establishing a shared commitment meets need for greater coordination for prevention, and a common purpose.</td>
<td>• Develop a Joint Statement of Commitment to Prevention to which local government, community sector organisations, and other partners can commit.</td>
<td>12 Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Build partnership and collaboration for local action.</td>
<td>1-3 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Establish the <em>Thrive Tasmania</em> criteria under which all preventive health programs, activities and organisations can contribute to a shared vision.</td>
<td>1-3 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Establish the evidence-base and proof of concept for the model in selected communities across Tasmania.</td>
<td>A means for a community-driven model for health and wellbeing, identifying resources and implementation plans.</td>
<td>• Establish model for <em>Thrive Tasmania</em> communities, where priorities are identified by members of the community.</td>
<td>12 Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Commence the <em>Thrive Tasmania</em> community model of health and wellbeing with a small number of test sites, with a view to building the number of <em>Thrive Tasmania</em> communities over time.</td>
<td>1-3 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop responsibilities, planning and evaluation strategies for the <em>Thrive Tasmania</em> model.</td>
<td>1-3 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Support community-driven health and wellbeing strategies with information, knowledge, tools and resources, including personnel.</td>
<td>Evidence informed strategies are needed to drive demand in local communities for wellbeing, sense of place and health promotion.</td>
<td>• Use local or community partnership agreements to bring all stakeholders together.</td>
<td>If resources allow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Establish support mechanisms for local government and partner organisations to coordinate effort at a local level.</td>
<td>If resources allow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Work with local government to develop and implement community development strategies to maintain and improve health and wellbeing.</td>
<td>If resources allow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ensure all services and parts of the Department of Health and Human Services contribute to <em>Thrive Tasmania</em> communities.</td>
<td>1-3 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Foster and resource effective engagement strategies to inform local priority setting and build capacity for action.</td>
<td>Effective engagement for community decision-making requires adequate resourcing, which could be targeted.</td>
<td>• Invest in strategies for participatory engagement such as local summits, citizen juries, group creative processes and structured discussion.</td>
<td>With DPAC if resources allow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Use community cultural development strategies to support communities to develop sound, evidence-based and creative responses to their situation.</td>
<td>If resources allow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Work with and influence Tasmania Medicare Local to support local government and communities through the Tasmania Healthcare Assistance Package funding.</td>
<td>Until June 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2. Statewide Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2.1 Redirect state government programs, policy and processes to drive local *Thrive Tasmania* partnerships and initiatives (e.g. streamlined grants). | There is a need to drive the priority for reducing avoidable inequities. There is potential for greater integration of existing, successful programs, such as self-management, across the Tasmanian Health Organisations, Tasmania Medicare Local and other service providers. | • Actively engage health and human services including Tasmanian Health Organisations and Tasmania Medicare Local.  
• Implementation of health promotion, self-management and health literacy plans.  
• Establish an annual public health forum across whole-of-government to educate decision makers about the social determinants of health. | 3-5 Years  
3 Years  
If resources allow |
| 2.2 Support identified priorities, such as the early years and mental health, through local or community partnership agreements and local government health promotion plans. | Builds on place-based approaches across Government. The early years are a focus through Child and Family Centres and Community Houses. Parental mental health issues and deprivation during the early years significantly impact child health outcomes. | • Use local or community partnership agreements to bring all stakeholders together.  
• Produce a *Thrive Tasmania* toolkit, based on principles of place-based approaches, and using existing resources to support local health promotion activities.  
• Strong emphasis under *Thrive Tasmania* on the early years and mental health as a fundamental basis for good health and wellbeing. *Tasmania* communities. | 1-3 Years  
3-5 Years  
1-3 Years |
| 2.3 Provide health literacy and health equity training to support frontline health and human services staff working with vulnerable or at risk groups. | There is a need for greater awareness and understanding of issues surrounding the social determinants of health. | • Enable staff to better understand and respond to vulnerable and at risk people.  
• Written and oral communication takes account of low levels of literacy  
• Provide health literacy and health equity training to health and human services staff, particularly frontline workers and decision-makers. | 1-3 Years  
1-3 Years  
Until June 2016 |
### 3. Evidence-Based Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3.1 Conduct three-yearly population health surveys, establish community indicators and evaluate the effect of interventions. | Provides access to and explanation of regular information to inform planning and decision-making for health and wellbeing. Responds to calls from local government and other stakeholders for community level health and wellbeing data. | • Establish an ongoing, three-yearly population health survey for Tasmania.  
• Use population health survey data to produce and explain community profiles and indicators in support of municipal health and wellbeing strategies.  
• Make these community profiles and indicators publicly accessible, well promoted and easily understandable for communities. | If resources allow  
3-5 Years  
If resources allow |
| 3.2 Establish a State Public Health Plan led by a Public Health Advisory Committee with an ongoing action plan and budget to address identified health issues. | Establishes high-level leadership and commitment across government. The Public Health Act 1997 provides a legislative basis for the governance structure with which to drive these reforms. | • Develop and implement a State of Public Health Plan for Tasmania in response to the five-yearly State of Public Health Reports tabled in Parliament.  
• Establish a Public Health Advisory Committee made up of public health experts and heads of agencies to provide advice to government and drive action across portfolios | 1-5 Years  
If resources allow |
| 3.3 Assess the impact of major policy decisions and projects on health and equity. | Health equity impact assessment commissioned by the Public Health Advisory Committee will help raise public awareness of the influence of all sectors on health and wellbeing. Health equity impact assessment has been identified as a priority in the new Tasmanian Primary Health Framework. | • Develop criteria and methodology for health equity impact assessment across government.  
• Commence health equity impact assessment on selected Government programs, policy and processes of social and/or economic significance. | 1 Year  
If resources allow |
Tasmanian Government Response to the Final Report of the Ministerial Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council

Department of Health and Human Services
GPO Box 125
Hobart TAS 7001
P (03) 6222 7729
F (03) 6222 7409
www.dhhs.tas.gov.au