

NATIONAL PRIMARY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH NETWORK FORMAT FOR REPORTS FROM JURISDICTIONS 2007

State/Territory: Tasmania

HIGHLIGHTS OF REFORMS AND NEW INITIATIVES (as of September 2007)

Integrating the social determinates of health into primary health care:

Reforms and New Initiatives	Description	Issues
Tasmania's Health Plan	<p>Launched May 2007, <i>Tasmania's Health Plan</i> includes both the Primary Health and Clinical Services Plans. It is a road map for the development of all health services for the next 5 – 10 years.</p> <p><i>Tasmania's Health Plan</i> explicitly recognises the social determinate of health, as may be seen from the following excerpt:</p> <p>Tasmania is a small state with a dispersed population. Population growth over the planning period is expected to be modest, but the proportion of older people in the community will increase more rapidly than elsewhere in Australia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasmania has a higher level of socio-economic disadvantage than other Australian jurisdictions. • The ageing and socio-economic status of the population have important implications for the health service system because older people and people who experience socio-economic disadvantage have greater needs for health services. • The Tasmanian community has higher rates of preventable disease than communities in almost all other Australian States and Territories. These diseases are causing significant morbidity and mortality for individuals and are creating an unsustainable cost burden for our community. • There are substantial opportunities to redesign our service system and change our models of care to provide better care in more appropriate settings for our community. <p>Tasmania's Health Plan can be found at: http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/futurehealth</p>	<p>The Tasmanian Government has made improving health services in Tasmania a major priority in every Budget since been elected in 1998. Since 1997-98, total budgeted expenditure on health and human services has almost doubled. Over this same period the proportion of total government expenditure on health and human services has grown from approximately 28 per cent to 36 per cent.</p>

Other:

Reforms and New Initiatives	Description	Issues
<p>Primary Health Services Plan: Projects with a primary health focus</p>	<p>There are seven projects actioning the Primary Health Services Plan that are being implemented from within the Primary Health Services section of the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services. They will promote the ‘primary health approach’ to service provision. Key elements of the primary health care approach include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a focus on health and wellbeing, not just illness; • a population perspective on health, not only for individuals; • a multi-disciplinary team approach to care; • a partnership approach in which a range of groups and organisations need to work together on improving health; • a focus on actual health needs, such as chronic disease, rather than service needs; and • fostering individuals’ control over their health and participation in health decision making. <p>Priority projects with a Primary Health focus include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Primary Health Development project – this has recruited support staff to work with community health and rural health service providers to promote the primary health approach. • The Rural Health Redevelopment project – this has worked to ensure that the services provided in our rural centres better meet the needs of the population. This process has already started at the Ouse and Rosebery service centres. 	<p>Tasmania needs to change the way we provide health services. Our current investment pattern is not meeting the community’s needs or contemporary service delivery practice. It is sometimes difficult to convince local communities that service changes will be of benefit when they have not experienced these before.</p>
<p>Primary Health Services Plan: Projects with a focus on primary and acute care integration</p>	<p>These projects will promote improved communication and collaboration between hospital and non-hospital services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • through the establishment of Clinical Networks across the acute, primary and other services, • through the development of cross-program integrated care centres, • through a redefinition of the role of Community Nursing in order to provide more acute level care in the community, for example cancer nurses, Hospital in the Home arrangements; and • through the development of Community Health “in-reach” services into the major hospitals. 	<p>The Australian Government’s intervention into the Mersey hospital has meant that the Clinical Services Plan will need to be revised.</p>

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	<p>Planning for Integrated Care Centres is a priority project. These new facilities will accommodate a range of health services that provide efficient, integrated care regardless of who funds, owns or provides each element of the services.</p> <p>The Clinical Networks project is another priority for 2007. These will enable improved communication and collaboration between service providers. The first step has already been taken with work to establish a Clinical Advisory Council.</p>	
Primary Health Services Plan: Projects with a focus on integration with general practice	<p>These projects will support the sustainability of the sector and provide additional capacity to respond to the challenges of chronic disease through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work to progress general practice provision of state-funded community health services; • developing a demonstration site in Launceston; • developing a consistent Departmental policy concerning the availability of support arrangements for general practice; • closer links between rural General Practitioners and acute hospitals, especially for training and support; • co-location of general practice and state health services will occur where this is possible and would benefit service arrangements; • funding demonstration sites, in both urban and rural communities, of new chronic disease/ community and population health initiatives using a team approach incorporating community health and general practice; and • following the evaluation of demonstration sites, as benefits are proven and resources become available, it is envisioned that these initiatives will become established elements of Tasmania's primary health service system. 	<p>The recent recruitment of a Service Innovation Manager for General Practice means that projects to develop a closer, more effective, working relationship between primary health services and general practice can commence after an initial delay in implementation.</p>
Primary Health Services Plan: Projects with a focus on integration with other parts of	<p>These projects will promote improved communication and collaboration between primary and community health services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • through the development of consultation, liaison and outreach services from Alcohol and Drug Services and Mental Health Services to primary health centres; • through the development of Home and Community Care services which prevent or delay, decline and promote client independence (with a percentage of the funding allocation attributed specifically to rural and remote areas); and 	<p>The recent recruitment of project staff means that work can commence in this area.</p>

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community health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> through the development of Primary Health Partnerships at the local level incorporating both local service providers from general practice, non-government organisations and State and Local Government as well as community representation. <p>The Community Transport project is a priority project to establish community transport networks that will better coordinate and improve transport options for people requiring access to non urgent attending health care services where public transport is either not available or is inappropriate</p>	
Primary Health Services Plan: Projects with a focus on workforce sustainability	<p>Projects to make Tasmania's health workforce stronger and more sustainable include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased support, through General Practice Workforce Tasmania, to aid in the recruitment of general practitioners to Tasmania; implementation of Nurse Practitioners working in rural health teams in 2008; consideration of new workforce models to meet the new service requirements eg generic health degrees that will equip health providers to undertake lifestyle counseling and support in relation to chronic disease, increased utilisation of therapy assistants, direct care providers; expanded scope of practice for rural paramedics; and consideration of retention strategies that can assist existing health professionals to stay in the workforce. <p>A priority in this area is the Learning for the Future project, which will expand the range of teaching sites in primary health and has started to develop proposals for an Interdisciplinary Primary Health School (South) and Integrated Medical and Health Education Unit (North).</p>	Some current staff will have their conditions of work altered as primary health services move into a greater emphasis on community based services rather than inpatient activity. Work is under way to resolve these conflicts.