



Media Release
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AMA calls for better health outcomes for all Tasmanians

The Australian Medical Association (AMA) Tasmania has called on all political parties to pledge to six simple reforms of the state's health system to ensure better health outcomes for all Tasmanians in the lead up to the 2014 state election.

AMA Tasmania President Dr John Davis said health was the cornerstone of any state government's responsibility to its community, and there needed to be a bi-partisan political commitment to health that went beyond the three to four year political cycle.

"The hallmark of the health system in Tasmania has been political point scoring, confused policies and a lack of a clear, consistent strategy to improve the health and wellbeing of all Tasmanians," Dr Davis said.

"This is why we are calling for the creation of a single funding model for health, a long term health strategy, more frontline staff, better graduate training opportunities, greater efficiency and more coal face consultation with clinicians and general practitioners.

"We all know the cost of health care is continually on the rise and while more dollars in the system will always help, part of our strategy is to work harder with less.

"Working harder with less means we must coordinate how we spend our health dollars, and having different funding sources spread across state and federal governments, as well as a raft of other bodies in the middle, only results in money wasted.

"The current funding system not only creates confusion and an overlap of services, it also means there are huge gaps in the system because of responsibility being passed from one funder to another."

Dr Davis said a single funding source and a long term health strategy that went beyond the three or four year electoral process, would result in a great opportunity to provide real health benefits to the Tasmanian community.

"A long term plan would help establish clear and consistent goals, instead of being changed as one government goes, a huge amount of time and effort could be saved," he said.

"Part of this plan must include consulting more with those people in the health system who work at the coal face.

"Local GPs are close to their communities and they know what they need when it comes to their health needs, yet they are overlooked when it comes to identifying solutions that actually work in the real world.

"Add to this better post graduate training, job opportunities for young doctors and more competitive working conditions and Tasmania could create a health system that can focus on excellence, instead of struggling on a day-to-day basis just to fill vital roles."



AMA

TASMANIA

Dr Davis said the initiatives, coupled with better efficiencies in the sector, could mean the money spent in health could be used on the important things to ensure health outcomes for all Tasmanians.

“This plan isn’t rocket science; it’s about coming up with better solutions to current problems and working harder with less to ensure we achieve better health outcomes,” he said.

“It’s a pivotal time for Tasmania’s health system and importantly our public hospitals in the lead up to the 2014 state election.

“This election is about the next Tasmanian government committing to all elements that ensure the delivery of high quality health care to all Tasmanians, within clinically appropriate timeframes.”

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