



Media release

Wednesday, 29th August 2018

AMA SEEKS POSITIVE SOLUTIONS TO DEFINITELY FIX THE ONGOING CRISIS AT RHH

The public outcry in support of AMA Member Dr Frank O’Keeffe following this week’s media conference announcement of government supported additional women's health funding has again highlighted the need for consistent and strategic funding of hospital infrastructure and services, particularly those provided by the Royal Hobart Hospital. The AMA has already scheduled an urgent meeting with Minister Michael Ferguson and is presently awaiting confirmation of a meeting with the Speaker of the House the Hon. Sue Hickey to discuss progress on the Associations recommended solutions.

The AMA spokesperson on RHH services Dr Frank Nicklason said, “The Royal Hobart Hospital carries a heavy responsibility, it must not only cater for the acute public hospital needs of southern Tasmania, half of the entire Tasmanian population, but it must unfailingly deliver tertiary and complex hospital services for the entire Tasmanian population.”

“As the main trauma and retrieval centre for Tasmania and the provider of ultimate resort for the complex acute healthcare needs of every Tasmanian the RHH and its staff bear an inescapable responsibility,” he said.

Dr Nicklason continued “the clinicians and all hospital staff at the Royal willingly accept their role and the hospital’s responsibility in the Tasmanian health system, but they feel this responsibility deeply and at times need to “say it as it is”.”

He said, “The doctors and staff at the RHH work under incredible pressure when the infrastructure and bed capacity is not up to scratch; the courage and determination this requires demands the recognition and respect from our health leaders”.

The AMA supports increased RHH physical and functional clinical capacity, noting our recent and ongoing approaches to the Minister and Premier on this issue. Importantly, the AMA holds a strong and clearly outlined position on the RHH site Master planning including our proposal on an urgent need for next phase of Redevelopment at RHH.

The AMA has been actively lobbying the Government to support an ongoing rebuild of RHH physical and functional capacity, with recent approaches to the Minister and Premier on this issue.

Dr Nicklason said the AMA’s position is that “There needs to be an updated RHH facility master plan encompassing the immediate and longer-term redevelopment requirement of RHH and its Repat campus, and the Minister and Government have agreed to do this and release a master plan by the end of February 2019.”



Further, “The AMA firmly believes that a Stage Two for the RHH Redevelopment should be progressed as a priority to adequately deal with outstanding RHH facility requirements in areas such as acute inpatient Mental Health, ED, ICU, Pathology, Medical Imaging, Pharmacy, Training-Simulation,” Dr Nicklason said.

“The next phase of RHH Redevelopment is needed both for meeting the service requirements of the immediate community of Hobart and Southern Tasmania, but also for the tertiary care needs of Tasmanians state wide,” he said.

The AMA sees funding the urgently needed next steps in RHH redevelopment as an area where both levels of government potentially need to step-up, with Federal-State partnership funding being a smart option for all Tasmanian politicians to unite around.

The AMA highlighted the crucial role of teaching and training in the health system. “We need to be supporting the critical roles of undergraduate and postgraduate training and education, and this means ensuring adequate clinical opportunities completely support our Registrar training programs”.

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