



MEDIA RELEASE

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BUDGET CUTS IMPACT FRONTLINE STAFF AND PATIENT CARE

AMA Tasmania says the \$11.7 million budget cut confirmed yesterday by Treasurer, Peter Gutwein will impact frontline staff and affect patient care unless it is immediately reinvested back into frontline services.

AMA Tasmania Vice-President Dr John Davis added that while there are always better and more efficient ways to deliver services, the Tasmanian health system cannot afford any measures that take money out of the system.

"The size of a cut is irrelevant because the fact is to impose a cut of any magnitude on any of our hospitals at this crucial time is reckless and damaging to patients' services and staff morale.

"Tasmania's health budget is already overstretched. There is simply no room for any cuts to health funding without causing catastrophic damage to already overstretched services.

"How can you take money out of a system when there are still ambulances ramping at our major hospitals, people staying too long in the emergency departments due to lack of in-patient beds and patients are being left languishing on the elective surgery waiting list?

"It makes a mockery of the government's investment in more doctors and nurses when they give with one hand and take with the other.

"These cuts could not come at a worse time and will have a dramatic effect on staff morale.

"The reality is that any cuts to hospitals' budgets whether they are administration or frontline care staff will see patients not receiving the care they need when they need it and elective surgery patients having to wait longer for their operations, putting lives at risk.

"The government should be looking towards the future in matching mainland salaries and training opportunities and providing competitive openings for career growth to attract and retain the best people for the jobs regardless of their role within the system. Asking already overworked and demoralised staff to do more with less will have dire consequences.

The health system cannot function when it is continually asked to do more with less. Only a fully staffed and fully operational and supported health care system will be able to undertake innovative health care delivery to find real long-term efficiencies and savings." **ENDS**

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