



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

### **HEALTH SHOULD BE PRIORITY IN ELECTION**

AMA Tasmania President Professor John Burgess today called on all sides of politics to put health first in this Federal election campaign.

“We are yet to see any substantive commitment from either the federal Labor or Liberal Party for hospitals in Tasmania.

“Our acute care hospitals are bulging at the seams with growing demand.

“Our staff are being stretched to the limit dealing with the growing number of patients.

“It is time both major parties came out with a comprehensive plan for supporting the state government in building the 21st-century hospital infrastructure that Tasmanians need – and this goes beyond just short-term funding promises for areas such as elective surgery or cancer services.

“Although these are important areas of care, our elective surgery patients and cancer patients first need to be able to get in the door of Tasmania’s public hospitals if they are to get treatment from our doctors and nurses – this means refurbished and contemporary hospital facilities with adequate bed numbers and appropriate long-term staffing numbers.

“The state government has a hospital renewal Master Plan that the AMA fully supports, but it needs help with Federal funding to ensure the vision for the Repat and L Block of the Royal Hobart Hospital can be realised sooner rather than later. So, it is frustrating to see \$50 million promised to MONA for building works, while patients and community look destined to continue to suffer from inadequate hospital infrastructure and staffing.

“The AMA recognises how important MONA has been in putting Hobart on the tourism map and helping to grow the local economy and wants to see the business sustainable over the long term. However, it is only after the issues in our health system have been adequately addressed that public money should be invested in such a project.

“Labor should start by promising to fund the next stages of the RHH redevelopment.”

**ENDS**

#### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

Dr John Davis – Vice President AMA Tasmania – 0488 142 033

Lara Giddings – CEO AMA Tasmania – 0400 417 160