A plan to build a Healthy Tasmania

Building a Tasmania we can all be proud of

The Plan to rebuild essential services
A Healthy Tasmania

The Liberals have a goal to make Tasmania the healthiest population in Australia by 2025.

Tasmania’s current approach to health promotion is ad hoc and fragmented. There is a need for Government leadership to drive a new coordinated effort to address Tasmania’s poor public health outcomes.

If we don’t act now, our State faces an unprecedented health challenge over the next decade in treating preventable or lifestyle related diseases.

A majority Hodgman Liberal Government recognises that if we are to improve the health and wellbeing of all Tasmanians and become the healthiest population in Australia by 2025, we must first think differently about how we can deliver a whole-of-Government, and whole-of-community approach.

We will begin work immediately on a statewide integrated approach to promoting good health and preventing chronic disease, including:

- Bringing together key stakeholders, including all tiers of government, business, the community sector, Tasmanian Medicare Local, the University of Tasmania and relevant health providers, to find the best way to address Tasmania’s current ad hoc approach;

- Working to identify and bring together funding streams, resources, skills, experience and programs into an umbrella organisation with a single focus and a whole of Government, whole-of community and health-in-all policies approach to improving the health of Tasmanians, and to keep Tasmanians healthier for longer;

- Determining the best structure of the organisation, whether that is a body within government, or a legislated entity independent of government to deliver our Plan;

- If it is determined that the new structure will be independent of government, introduce legislation to establish the new entity and resolve its make-up, reporting structure and level of core government funding;

- Aggressively chase down corporate funding streams and Federal Government for health promotion and disease prevention in Tasmania;

- Undertaking Big Data mapping of the social determinants affecting the health and wellbeing of the Tasmanian community, in a key partnership with the University of Tasmania;

- Establishing links with national organisations like the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation to share knowledge and research;

- Developing an achievable five-year Strategic Plan that is aimed at demographics (from educating children to changing habits of middle-aged Tasmanians and keeping older people living well) and place-based solutions in lower socio-economic areas;
Based on the Strategic Plan, establishing funded partnerships for change, including with Government and business (for a healthier public and private sector workforce to improve productivity), with education sectors (for healthier children), and with community organisations and local government (to deliver grassroots programs in all Tasmanian communities);

- Working with the University of Tasmania to further scope out the University of Tasmania’s Northern Health Initiative plan to develop the new workforce skills needed to provide solutions to chronic disease, lifestyle, physical activity, disability and ageing, and to meet skills shortages in health-related areas into the future;

- Initiating a whole-of-State new benchmarking system to improve the way we measure public health outcomes;

- In parallel to the Liberals’ new single state-wide planning code, determine the need to develop a State Policy to improve and increase options for physical activity, such as walking and cycling; and

- Working with acute and primary care providers throughout Tasmania on referral pathways for GPs, hospitals and clinicians to direct Tasmanians at risk to locally-based lifestyle change programs, services and information.

The Poor Health Facts

- 21.7 per cent of Tasmanians smoke, compared to 18 per cent nationally;

- 69.4 per cent of Tasmanians are physically inactive, compared to 67.5 per cent nationally.

- 65.6 per cent of Tasmanians are now overweight or obese, compared with 63.9 per cent five years ago;

- 39.4 per cent of Tasmanians have high cholesterol – compared to 32.8 per cent nationally; and

- Cardiovascular disease is responsible for 31 per cent of deaths in Tasmania and costs our health system $322 million each year.

Costings

This policy will be driven from within existing resources.