



Health Consumers Tasmania

Building a Consumers Health Voice in Tasmania

2021 Election Commitment – Community Health Innovation Hubs

Context:

Communities are telling Health Consumers Tasmania three things:

- i. accessing health services is getting more difficult for many people, particularly those in rural and remote areas
- ii. navigating the health system is difficult as the system is complex and often siloed in its approach to health delivery
- iii. people want to be treated within their communities when it is safe to do so

COVID has taught us that:

- i. communities come together to support each other particularly when under pressure
- ii. prioritising our health, and the health of our communities has become more acceptable within the community
- iii. the impact social and economic factors (for example, jobs, family, isolation, digital connectivity etc) have on our health and wellbeing has become more clear

To conclude, communities want to take ownership of their health and wellbeing and to have a long-term holistic focus on both the health of themselves and the health of their communities through better coordinated community health and related services. This enables communities to have a stronger voice and a say in what services they want locally and provides a pathway for communities to build bridges for their citizens to access healthcare services. It also provides an important opportunity to allow communities to take a longer-term approach to health care, strengthen their understanding of the broader social factors impacting their health and the health of their communities and identify preventative measures appropriate for their community.

This was summarised succinctly in the *Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council*, March 2021, recommendation #35 - "The State Government and its agencies should actively seek out and fund community-led placed based recovery activities" and in *Our Healthcare Futures* discussion paper, "planning for the future – strengthen the clinical and consumer voice in health service planning".

What is a Community Health Innovation Hub?

Each local community will determine the shape and focus of their “hub” but a key outcome of this initiative will be to build the capacity of regional communities to identify and respond to local health care needs.

Community Health Innovation Hubs would be managed by local communities (Local Health Connectors) who are resourced to bring together health consumer representatives, community advocates, clinical health services, social support services, community and sporting groups and supportive business enterprise to reduce the growing gap between the community and primary and allied health and wellbeing care.

The focus of the hubs will be two-fold:

- work with the community to codesign a local approach to ensure they have access to the health services they require
- work with all service providers (community, private and government) to improve and strengthen their ability to collaborate and provide coordinated community-based health care focused on the specific needs of their community

The Hubs will employ a small number of staff, supported by Health Consumers Tasmania, to identify and undertake projects to improve access to health services, increase health literacy and awareness, health prevention activities and health related research.

The project funding will deliver the following outcomes:

- i. bring together all available information on existing local health service providers in the one location, provide information to the community and raise awareness on health related matters and services
- ii. build sustainable and cooperative connections across existing community-based services and clinical regional communities
- iii. identify drivers to local health outcomes
- iv. identify gaps in service provisions currently available to the community
- v. strengthen the capacity of communities to articulate and speak about their local health needs
- vi. build relationships with policy makers and outside providers to improve community access to services
- vii. influence the purchasing of the mix of health services required by the community to fill any gaps in service delivery.

The four locations listed are based on a mix of both the socio-economic data and health profiles of the region and the degree of ‘readiness’ of the communities to engage, would be pilot projects over two years and each community would determine what form its ‘hub’ would take for their region.

To achieve this, Health Consumers Tasmania recommends Community Health Innovation Hubs be established in:

- Huon region
- Sorell / Tasman Peninsular
- Scottsdale
- Central Coast

For each hub, indicative budget breakdown:

Establishment:	\$75,000
Health Consumers Tasmania oversight (\$25,000)	
Setup costs	
Staffing and on costs:	\$250,000
Hub Manager	
Community Liaison	
Administration	
Operational Costs:	\$150,000
Rent	
Utilities	
Transport	
Community Projects:	\$275,000
Total	\$750,000

Notes re budget:

Establishment costs include Health Consumers Tasmania employing a manager to oversight the proposed four pilot hubs (\$100,000 in total).

A component of the set-up costs involves an evaluation process that will be established at the commencement of the project and concluded in year 2.

Community projects are considered important to allow the community to deliver initiatives that they have identified. This may include projects that involve, for example: scoping and advertising for specific health related services to be located in their region; targeted health research into their community; work towards co-location of existing health services; establish a health information centre; mobile /outreach health service provision to other towns within their locality; digital health access or even purchase services (eg youth mentor or nurse practitioner to be collocated with an existing service).

Election Commitment: Establish four Community Health Innovation Hubs as pilot projects - \$6.0 million over two years (\$750,000 per region per annum)