



## **Huge win for community as Liberals back community health initiative**

Health Consumers Tasmania (HCT) has welcomed the Liberal Party's commitment to invest in empowering communities through place-based preventative health hubs or networks.

HCT CEO, Bruce Levett, said this initiative has the potential to be a game-changer for the community.

"The lack of investment in health prevention measures in the past is the silent killer in our health system," Mr Levett said.

"Nearly half (48%) of all hospital admissions are for conditions that could be prevented, and given Tasmanians repeatedly tell us they do not want to go to hospital if they can help it, these initiatives are seen by the community as a positive step in resetting the health system"

"HCT is particularly pleased that the Liberals have listened to the communities voice and if elected, will commit \$4.5 million to partner with our organisation to establish three Tasmanian Community Health and Wellbeing Networks."

"Communities want to take ownership of their health and wellbeing and have access to better coordinated community health and related services. That's what these hubs will do," Mr Levett said.

"Importantly, this will enable communities to have a stronger voice and a say in what services they want locally. It will provide 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.

"These hubs will be managed by local communities and 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.

"This initiative delivers on 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 at the same time, allow communities and clinicians to voice their views on health service planning within their regions – consistent with Our Health Care Futures discussion paper.

"Improving access to health care, particularly at a local and regional level is identified as the community's highest priority area for Health Consumers Tasmania of focus on."