



Andrew Wilkie MP
INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR CLARK



The Hon Sarah Courtney MP
Minister for Health
Level 5, 4 Salamanca Place
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Dear Minister

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the issues raised in *Our Future Healthcare - Immediate Issues and Consultation Paper*. I welcome the State Government's desire to build an integrated and sustainable health service. However, I question the need for further consultation and delays following years of discussions and reports which have largely been ignored by successive state governments. Surely the time for consultation has passed.

It is self-evident that the public health system in Tasmania is in crisis and has been for many years. We are bombarded with reports of system failures and distressing stories from Tasmanians who struggle to receive the care to which they are entitled. Experts, including health professionals, have proposed solutions which have largely been ignored by governments which have also failed to provide adequate health funding. This is an ongoing political problem and I do not in any way blame health care professionals who continue to provide the best possible care under very difficult circumstances.

Constituents tell me that it is becoming harder to navigate an increasingly complex health system which is also becoming more expensive. Access to GPs, mental health and allied health services is often difficult and inequitable depending on where you live in the State. Tasmanians are tired of stopgap measures and are looking for a government with a long-term health plan with a focus on better community healthcare and a wellness approach.

I believe it is time for tough political decisions, such as the closure of one of the three northern hospitals and an increased investment in primary care. It is all well and good for politicians such as us, who earn a good wage and can afford private health insurance, but the vast majority who are not as privileged are struggling in a public health system which continues to let them down.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Wilkie MP
Independent Member for Clark

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