

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Our Healthcare Future](#)
Subject: Our Health Care Future Paper
Date: Monday, 1 February 2021 10:59:47 AM

The Honorable Sarah Courtney MP
Minister for Health
HOBART.

Dear Minister,
Thankyou for the opportunity to reply to your consultation paper.

Recently coming to Tasmania, specifically Wynyard, from Queensland I have been shocked to find that many GPs have refused my calls, citing that they are “not taking any new patients”. This has devastated myself and others who have come recently to this state. There is a considerable shift in population occurring in my residential area.

I am 74 years old and in excellent health, however this is made possible with regular check ups, now difficult it seems.

While I understand it has been difficult to attract new doctors to the area as is noted in the “Our Healthcare Future” paper I have a few suggestions referring to Reform Initiative 1 questions.

However, I would stress as I have below that a mandatory time spent in Tasmania and or the country areas within Tasmania, should be encouraged as many are not so interested in the money – a carrot that is waved too often in my opinion – and find that service brings greater rewards.

Reform Initiative 1 - Consultation Questions

1. The community care needs a strong focus. I would suggest immediate funding for more GPs as a priority. Perhaps the investments should be given consideration under the guise of population numbers.
2. Primary health care could be provided by:
 - a. Rostered doctors after hours and weekends at all times
 - b. Again, rostered doctors after hours and weekends – perhaps by telephone
 - c. Low income and vulnerable clients should not have to pay, therefore bulk billing is essential
 - d. For extended treatment options as in urgent options, specialists would need to be reachable at all times – not as popular, I understand!
3. No comment
4. There are many older Tasmanians who do not wish to use telehealth, it is intimidating and if they had other options it would be more acceptable.

5. No comment
6. I don't believe any health care should be prioritised. All should be attended to. Many health issues are caused by mental health issues.
7. I believe that elder persons care should not be segregated. Interfacing with the community at all levels is desirable so that elders do not feel "put away" at any time.
8. In Queensland there is a public section and a private section in a major hospital at Kawana. This works very well as a system. Therefore I would say that private hospitals should include a public area as well as its private "normal" section. I believe this would also alleviate any idea that a private hospital has "better care" and as they are often in the "right" areas, and as such they are useful.
9. Literacy, self management and preventative health could be improved by much education of the public. Too many people find issues about health to be troublesome, worrisome and not discussed enough.
10. I believe that doctor training should be followed by a mandatory time in the country or regional areas such as Tasmania's north west. This will lead to appreciation of the issues involved and perhaps even ensure that they choose to stay. Many good doctors have moved on to specialise instead of maintaining a good and steady GP practice that may not give them a huge income, but may provide a more satisfactory outcome.
11. I would say education is our best pathway. Too often people go to the doctor without understanding their bodies and having some idea of the care needed for them. The doctor is the one who answers "everything" or "nothing" at times. Taking more responsibility is desirable. Every piece of education is essential in my opinion.
12. The GP would ideally see that patients are accessing the most important care for them, therefore more GPs are absolutely priority.

Thankyou for the opportunity to voice my opinion. I look forward to seeing an improvement in the health services in my area.

Best Regards,
Christine G Smith

