

SECURING TASMANIA'S FUTURE

Tasmanian
Liberals



30 April, 2021

Ms Tammy Dickson
State Manager, Tasmania
Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
Email: Tammy.Dickson@surgeons.org

Dear Ms Dickson

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS), setting out the College's election priorities.

I can advise that a re-elected Majority Liberal Government will provide an additional \$120 million over four years for elective surgeries and endoscopies. This funding is on top of the \$36.4 million investment already budgeted for 2021- 22, making a total commitment of \$156.4 million over four years.

It is estimated this investment will deliver nearly 20,000 more elective surgeries and around 2300 extra endoscopies over the coming four years. We will prioritise 2021-22 to drive down the waiting list, by providing an extra 8300 surgeries state-wide for a total of more than 22,800 surgeries in that year.

This volume is almost twice the size of the waiting list, and the largest year of surgery ever in Tasmania. From 2022-23 onwards, we expect to provide more than 3700 additional surgeries each year, however the final volume of surgeries and endoscopies for each hospital each year will be dependent on the complexity of patients. The types of surgery will be determined in consultation with clinicians.

The Liberal Party is also committed to working closely with local private services to improve access to health services for Tasmanians. Under our policy, a one-off \$20 million fund will be made available to allow private hospitals to support our public services, especially with regard to our elective surgery investments.

We have invested consistently to support rural health services since coming to government in 2014, and we are committed to continuing to support rural areas with new funding for more staffing and equipment.



Our investments in expanding telehealth at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic are also now embedded within our service, and represent opportunities to further improve rural access to specialist health services in particular.

A re-elected Majority Liberal Government is committed to working with RACS and all interested stakeholders as we progress our long-term reform agenda under *Our Healthcare Future*. Importantly, this work will involve the continued progression of the workforce planning that is currently underway.

The draft *Workforce 2040* 20-year health workforce strategy for Tasmania has presented a number of initiatives for consideration. The feedback received from the initial consultation carried out will work to inform how this workforce planning will be supported going forward, including education and training opportunities to support a growth in specialties in need and better access to health care.

I look forward to the opportunity of progressing this work with RACS to ensure we have a health workforce that meets the needs of Tasmanians now and into the future.

Regarding clinical research, I can advise there has been significant work to ensure our research governance within the Department of Health is working more effectively. We will work with RACS to further improve research within the Tasmanian Health Service, particularly in the North and North West, through the new Research and Innovation Subcommittee of the Tasmanian Health Clinical Executive.

We will continue to work closely with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and the Commonwealth Government on protected titles, and a re-elected Majority Liberal Government will also provide ongoing support for the mortality audit program as a component of operational safety and quality processes.

For information about the Liberal Plan to secure Tasmania's future, including all our health policies please go to www.tas.liberal.org.au.

Thank you again for the opportunity to respond to these important issues.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Gutwein'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Peter Gutwein MP
Premier