

Royal Australasian College of Surgeons

Tasmanian Greens Response

Q1: What is your strategy to maintain and increase training posts within the public hospital system?

The Tasmanian Greens will work to strengthen the health workforce by improving efficiency in recruiting, providing attractive career structures and conditions which retain nurses, doctors and allied professionals in the public system.

Ensuring that Tasmania's hospitals retain their accreditation as teaching hospitals is paramount to ensuring that young Tasmanians can train and practise in Tasmania.

Q2: How does your party plan to build the surgical workforce of the future to address Tasmania's ageing population and health needs?

The Greens will consult with clinical experts to identify the most effective way of building a surgical workforce that meets our future needs. We have listened to clinicians, and commit to developing a plan for future training and employment.

Q3: Will you commit to greater investment in our public hospital system, and in its workforce?

In recognition of the systemic problems with Tasmania's health system, the Greens' largest investment will be in health. We will invest an additional \$220.08 million over four years to bring health services up to appropriate resourcing levels, and ensure health is a core government focus.

Q4: How will your party manage the issues around elective and outpatient waiting lists?

The Tasmanian Greens believe our health system is in crisis. The Greens committed to funding 200 additional beds, with the nursing and clinical staff to support them. In order to better manage elective and outpatient lists, we need to have a better working relationship between GPs and hospitals, and hospitals and the THS.

The Greens will also introduce a stand-alone palliative care facility in Northern Tasmania, which has an ageing population and an over-stretched public hospital, thus reducing pressure on beds.

Q5: What is your engagement strategy to foster a culture of mutual respect and ensure that decision making is clinician-led?

The Tasmanian Greens are committed to making evidence-based decisions, informed by experts. We have a track record of respectful communication, and are known to advocate for formal mechanisms that enable stakeholders to have a real say in decision-making, not just as a rubber stamp at the end. We support a greater role for clinicians in the resourcing and priorities of our institutions.

Q6: Will your party support the THS entering in to a Memorandum of Understanding with RACS on the Building Respect and Improving Patient Safety initiative, to show a commitment to improved workplace culture?

In principle, yes. The Tasmanian Greens are committed to encouraging a healthy workplace culture and would welcome the opportunity to work with the THS and RACS to improve the workplace environment for staff and patients.

Q7: The mortality audit program is part of an effective quality assurance activity aimed at the ongoing improvement of surgical care. The current contract expires at the end of December 2018. RACS seeks a commitment from your party that a further three years funding will be supported. The Tasmanian Greens are committed to accountability and transparency and a culture of always seeking to improve. So we would support further funding of this contract, if clinicians and management can demonstrate that it is delivering effective quality assurance.

Q8: Does your party support a ban on the use of quad bikes by children aged under the age of sixteen?

The Tasmanian Greens endorse the view of [SafeWorkAustralia](#) that children under 16 should never ride adult-sized quad bikes. We would be concerned to look at the risks for children riding smaller-sized quad bikes as well, and to consider protections to keep them safer.

Q9: What other strategies does your party have to minimise the risks associated with quad bike use?

The Tasmanian Greens will be guided by the best evidence available and the work currently being undertaken by Tasmania's Quad Bike Taskforce.

Q10: What are your party's policies to address alcohol-related harm?

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

- ensure all Tasmanians have ready access to current information and appropriate assistance to maintain a healthy lifestyle;
- prioritise integrated preventative health strategies;
- introduce legislation to restrict the advertising of alcohol.

Q11. Does your party support the move to co-locate a private hospital with the Launceston General Hospital, and if so are you able to outline what your plans are in this area?

We support an evidence-based assessment of the costs, benefits, and alternatives of this proposal. We also have yet to hear the views of a wide range of stakeholders. Although we understand the need to expand acute services, we also understand the problems that come from making overly rushed decisions about infrastructure spends that will last for decades. We would want to be confident there would not be a negative impact on the public health budget to fund private services, and agree complementarity and co-location of hospital services is more efficient as well as better for patients.

Q12. Data available from the Department of Transport shows no reduction in deaths or injuries over the past five years on Tasmanian Roads. How does your party plan to reduce road trauma?

Safety is a priority for the Greens with a 'zero-tolerance' attitude towards road fatality and serious accidents.

Pedestrian and cyclist Safety

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

- strengthen education about 1.5m distance of cars and cyclists
- promote a culture of normality and respect for cycling and walking
- encourage pedestrian crossings in high-use pedestrian areas
- support communities who want to slow vehicle traffic

- revise the planning scheme to make sure town planning prioritises walking and cycling – for pleasure, community-building, health and safety reasons

Driver and Vehicle Safety

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

- adopt a strategy of zero acceptability of road deaths;
- investigate additional measures to ensure adequate vehicle safety and emissions standards;
- promote driver training innovations for both commercial and domestic road users;
- promote the benefits of regular vehicle maintenance and appropriate inspection regimes.

Heavy Vehicles

The Tasmanian Greens will work to:

- enforce strict axle weight criteria based on dynamic testing of all suspension types;
- implement Static Rollover Threshold requirements for all heavy vehicles;
- remove general exemptions from nationally-agreed maximum vehicle loads;
- identify, in consultation with stakeholders, any thoroughfare inappropriate for heavy vehicle traffic;
- encourage shifting freight task from road to rail.

Q13. A recent 10 Year Review of childhood injury hospitalisations recommended that as a matter of urgency, the Federal Government re-establish a national injury prevention framework and implementation plan that is based on fact and evidence. Does your party support this position and if so how will you advocate for the Federal Government to implement such a program?

The Tasmanian Greens are committed to an evidence-based approach to policy and the need to keep our children safe.

We would work with our Federal colleagues in the Senate and House of Representatives to advocate for the implementation of such a program.