

**Media Release**

## **Mental Health Council of Tasmania responds to RHH Site Masterplan Review and Update – 2020-2050**

Yesterday, the State Government released an [updated Royal Hobart Hospital masterplan](#). Commitments and recommendations within the plan include:

- The completion of the RHH K-Block development in 2019, and confirming the relocation of mental health services into K-Block on completion
- Creating a discrete mental health safe assessment unit and support areas, as part of the ED expansion
- Recommending the redevelopment of the Hobart Repatriation Hospital site to house a critical mass of services to support a 24-hour sub-acute and mental health multi-disciplinary inpatient and outpatient facility

The Mental Health Council of Tasmania [MHCT] acknowledges the government's stated commitment to mental health services in Tasmania. We support and recognise the importance of developing strategies that aim to alleviate pressure on our overburdened emergency departments through system transformation and reform, as evidence tells us people experiencing emotional distress are not best supported within an ED setting.

We cannot lose focus on the prevention and early intervention approach as a significant aspect of any successful and integrated care model – ensuring the provision of options and supports **before** people become acutely unwell and require hospitalisation. In addition, the Mental Health Integration Taskforce, chaired by the Chief Psychiatrist, is due to release a report which we hope will identify pathways to create a cohesive, united and effective mental health system for our state. MHCT looks forward to understanding how the recommendations from this report will feed into the transformation of our mental health system in Tasmania and align with the government's latest recommendations and announcements.

MHCT recognises consultation around the development of the Repatriation mental health inter-disciplinary facility will be required, and in the interim, we believe the government must move from a recommendation to a clear commitment to fund and develop this facility. Specifically, we believe Tasmanians deserve clarity around:

- a confirmed and agreed upon commitment to the facility and a development timeline
- staffing composition and recruitment strategies, and
- confirmation of an integrated care model that must include community-managed support services, as well as sub-acute options for this proposed facility

MHCT CEO, Connie Digolis, says, *“What we need is universal support for a long-term commitment towards integration. These recommendations and commitments represent an important opportunity for Tasmania to lead the nation and set a new standard in mental health care, offering services and supports co-delivered wherever possible through a combination of acute, sub-acute and community managed options. The key is to build a truly person-centred, integrated model that delivers for our communities, and that can ensure supports are available and accessible at all points during people's journey”.*

\*ENDS

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Lifeline: 13 11 14 [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

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