



AMA

TASMANIA

REPORT CARD ON TASMANIAN HOSPITALS

The AMA Public Hospital Report Card was released nationally today in Sydney and shows a decline in the performance of Tasmanian Public Hospitals for the period 2007/08.

Tasmanian AMA President Dr. Chris Middleton expressed concern about the statistics shown for Tasmania. "We have seen a further decline in the Emergency Department performance in 2007/08", he said.

Dr. Middleton said, "Only 42% of urgent patients were seen in recommended time compared with 62% the previous year".

The percentage of elective surgery patients seen in the recommend 90 day period was down by 5% from 54% in 2006/07.

On the brighter side elective surgery waiting times were shorter, the median waiting time being 36 days down from 38 in 2006/07.

Dr. Middleton went on to say, "In 2009 there has been an increased number of presentations, and admissions and staff in these public hospitals have been under enormous pressure, they need to be supported by the State Government with further investment in extra hospital beds and resources", he said.

There are extra medical graduates coming through the education system currently which could help with workforce shortages in the future however the Government is not responding with the necessary internships or prevocational training positions to take advantage of this or the extra infrastructure required to cope with more patients.

"Hospital bed numbers must increase and emergency departments must be given the resources to cope with the additional demand", he said.

Dr. Middleton went on to say, "The Tasmanian public hospital system needs to be sufficiently resourced to provide for average bed occupancy of 85%. Once bed occupancy rates rise above this figure, the hospital system is not able to cope with peaks in demand and to deliver necessary care to both emergency and elective cases".

Dr Middleton will be available for further comment at 2.45 pm today at 170 George St Launceston. (Phone 03 63341455)

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