



## **Public Hospital Performance**

The AMA national scorecard of public hospital performance released last week emphasised the under-funding of our hospitals by the Howard government and the excessive cut back on beds over recent years. The public hospital system has been put under intense pressure.

However, Tasmania performs particularly badly – low average or bottom of the class for all performance outcomes. Tasmania does especially badly for urgent elective surgery and admissions to hospital of critical cases from emergency departments (bed block!). This was in spite of a national average expenditure per head of population. This poor use of resources emphasises the urgency of major strategic reform within our hospital system so that our financial and workforce resources can be used more cleverly and efficiently used to improve these poor clinical outcomes.

On Friday 26 October, the AMA Tasmania President Professor Haydn Walters met with the Health Minister, Lara Giddings, to press the need for urgent action and for a recommitment to the Clinical Service Plan. The Minister agreed with the AMA about the importance and urgency of reform and denied recent reports that the process was “on hold”. The Minister affirmed her commitment to the CSP and outlined considerable activity on planning projects within the DHHS. The Minister through her Department aims to launch the first tranch of new clinical networks before the end of the year, and more in early 2008. The Minister agreed to AMA requests for more transparency and involvement in the process and will facilitate regular meetings and updates to be publicly disseminated by the AMA.

AMA Tasmania will maintain its watching brief on the Clinical Services Plan, and pressure for urgent improvements in performance of our State health system.

Professor Walters, AMA Tasmania President, will be available for interview on request.

Please contact Professor Walters on **0419 770 086**.