



MEDIA RELEASE

Health Blow out

The report in today's Mercury newspaper validates AMA Tasmania's call for the State Government's Department of Health and Human Services to undergo a complete shake up and develop a Statewide Plan for Health Services in Tasmania as a matter of urgency.

In August 2006 AMA Tasmania strongly recommended the Tasmanian Government urgently develop a coherent state-wide strategic plan for the delivery of quality, sustainable hospital services.

The Association urged the Government not to spend any more taxpayer money without a plan for delivering quality health services to this and the next generation of Tasmanians.

Dr Michael Aizen, President of AMA Tasmania is appalled that the Government is now considering additional cost cutting in Tasmania's already over burdened health system because their Health Department has failed to have even a basic plan in place for the expenditure of its billion dollar budget.

To blame the hospitals and doctors for overspending on patient care is a slight on all members of our profession. Dr Aizen said "Our dedicated members and colleagues are already at breaking point. Morale is low and they are working under intolerable conditions. To be told to cut back even further will not assist in the retention of doctors already in the state and have a detrimental affect on recruiting."

The AMA was delighted when in Minister Giddings announced the commencement of a statewide planning process. Dr Aizen said "The Association was however very disappointed at the length of the time of this current process the lack of action of previous reports, such as the Governments own "Richardson Report"."

The time for action is now. The Minister and her Department must get their own house in order. Penalising hard working health professionals and their patients is not an approach that the AMA in Tasmania will support.

For further comment Dr Michael Aizen can be contacted on 0408 339 351