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DAVID BARTLETT MUST GO INTO BAT FOR THE RHH.

Now is not the time for the State government to go cold on the redevelopment of the Royal Hobart Hospital.

- The new RHH will have a 50 year lifespan during which time the cycle of economic boom and bust will continue. It will take about 8 to 10 years to complete the development during which time the recent economic downturn will hopefully be long forgotten. An asset with such a long useful life should override short term "credit crunch" issues.
- In times of economic downturn the need for high quality health care will increase. The relationship between unemployment, poverty and poor health is well established.
- With the economy contracting, this would be the very best of times for the State government to invest in major infrastructure development.
- The current hospital is well past its use by date and becoming dilapidated. The central buildings are nearly 80 years. Internationally, 30 years is considered old for a hospital.

The Federal Labor government is leading the way with its major spending initiatives to shore up the Australian economy. The Tasmanian State government must follow suit and when David Bartlett goes to Canberra tomorrow, he must make the strongest representations for Commonwealth assistance for the new RHH development. If financial support is not forthcoming from Federal sources, alternative funding must be considered.

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For further comment, please contact Dr Christopher Middleton, President AMA Tasmania-phone 0408130449.