



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **NO PETS ALLOWED**

The AMA in Tasmania is concerned by the decision of the Health Minister to halt the imminent installation of the PET scanner into the Hobart Private Hospital, without assurances that patients will not be put at risk or inconvenienced and that they retain the support of the technologists and nuclear medicine physicians that will be needed in the future.

AMA State President, Professor Haydn Walters, said “I am very disappointed by the last minutes notice to cease installation of the PET scanner into the Hobart Private Hospital with out an immediate replacement.”

Professor Walters said “The vital piece of equipment has the potential to save Tasmania lives and avoid distress to very ill people who currently have to travel interstate. If the State Government is to veto the implementation of this life saving diagnostic tool then they must be prepared to provide the same service in the same time frame as the private operator. 2010 is not reasonable”.

The AMA has no preference for who owns or operates the equipment provided there is appropriate and free access for public patients and that it is available to researchers, trainees and students as well as clinicians for their patients. Professor Walters said “For the 500 patients that need to fly interstate for this service at the moment, most of whom are already seriously ill, having a PET scanner in Tasmania would greatly improve their well being and potentially their outcomes”

This episode highlights a gap in the strategic management and planning of health care in Tasmania , where the private and public systems do not seem to communicate or liaise closely enough over a whole host of increasingly urgent issues. As the workforce crisis hits us, as complex technology expands, and the populations’ ages, this deficiency could lead to a critical failure of the whole system. Let’s learn from this experience.

Professor Walters will be available for comment at AMA State Office, 147 Davey St at 4pm.