

POSITION STATEMENT

MAY 2009



“INTEGRATED CARE CENTRES” IN TASMANIA

The State Government is currently planning Integrated Care Centres (ICCs) across the State with up to four in the South at Clarence (to be co-located with a GP Super Clinic), Hobart (as part of the new Royal Hobart Hospital development), Kingborough/Kingston, and possibly Glenorchy and one in the North at Launceston. There are currently no plans for ICCs in the North West region.

The General Practice Tasmania Network strongly supports the need for greater integration in patient care and the development of a model that provides better linkages between care currently provided separately in the primary and acute care settings. The Network believes that the service model for ICCs and the mix of services located at each site must be adaptable to local needs, must integrate smoothly with existing care and referral pathways and must be planned with meaningful input from the communities in which they are located, including all local GPs.

Further, the Network believes that development of ICCs only has the potential to improve care for clients with chronic and complex care needs if a number of principles are adhered to:

1. Integration cannot be successfully achieved merely with the co-location of services.
2. The ICC model must exemplify innovative multi-disciplinary care with both centralised and outreach services.
3. The rationale for integration must not be motivated by a cost saving agenda.
4. Whilst an ICC should not be the location for an individually owned and operated general practice, a GP presence, either actual or virtual, would be an important aspect of team based care for some patients and services however, GPs should not be the key providers of medical care within ICCs.
5. The ICC must be supported by a strong community governance model that enables input from all members of the broader health care team.
6. ICCs must be in a position to draw funding from a range of sources to maximise their future sustainability.
7. The service model must clearly demonstrate simplified patient access and better care coordination including assigned accountability for case management.
8. ICCs should not needlessly duplicate expensive equipment that is accessible elsewhere.
9. Existing functional services should not be relocated to ICC sites unless relocation yields greater opportunities for effective integration.
10. ICCs should focus on step-up primary care delivering services for patients with chronic and complex care needs including those not well serviced by the current system, via referral only.
11. ICCs must not detract from or reduce services available to patients in rural areas. Equity in access to services for those patients in areas not covered by an ICC must be assured.
12. The service model must meet the expectations of GPs particularly in relation to referrals in and out of the centre and their participation in case management.
13. Adequate investment in information systems to support clinical communication between service providers will be essential.

The General Practice Tasmania network is a unique statewide infrastructure that supports contemporary general practice in Tasmania by linking GPs with each other, by supporting all members of the general practice team and by supporting allied health professionals to be part of the primary care team.
General Practice Tasmania is also a proud member of the Australian General Practice Network.



14. The service model must provide quality teaching, learning and research opportunities including the potential for clinical attachments.

The General Practice Tasmania Network has developed position statements on various issues relevant to the operation of the health services system and relating to general practice across the State. These position statements reflect the views of Tasmanian GPs and the primary care community.

Each position statement is based upon research and the analysis of relevant literature as well as an assessment of the broader health sector environment. The position statements are developed collaboratively between the State Based Organisation, the three Divisions of General Practice and the Workforce Support Agency within Tasmania. During the development of each statement the Divisions and Workforce Agency consult with their Tasmanian GP members and Boards respectively. Prior to release the statements are ratified by the Boards of each of the organisations that constitute the General Practice Tasmania Network.

Collaboration with other general practice organisations (eg General Practice Training Tasmania, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, etc) is also a feature in the development of some position statements. The co-endorsement of position statements maximises the effectiveness of these statements and represents a strong collective view.

It is expected that position statements will evolve to reflect the ever-changing health and general practice environment. Accordingly feedback and comment is invited to ensure that the position statements continue to be relevant and accurately reflect the views of the Tasmanian general practice and primary care community.

To provide feedback on any position statement please contact any of the organisations that constitute the General Practice Tasmania Network:



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