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Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

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Guy Barnett, Minister for Health

Record levels of elective surgery

Tasmania is delivering record levels of elective surgery at the highest rate in the country, according to a new report.

Data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's (AIHW) Elective Surgery Wait Times 2022-23 Report reveals an unprecedented 21,364 elective surgeries were delivered in Tasmania in 2022-23 – a 5.2% increase on the previous year.

Tasmania also recorded a nation-leading 37.4 admissions per 1,000 population, significantly above the national rate of 28.3 per 1,000 population.

Importantly, Tasmania is the only Australian jurisdiction to register a net increase (+ 4.6%) in elective surgery admissions since 2018-19, reflecting the resilience and preparedness of Tasmania's elective surgery plan during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tasmania also saw improvement in the proportion of patients admitted within the clinically-recommended time from 2021-22 to 2022-23 – increasing from 57.2% to 61.7% - and across all other waiting times indicators.

Fewer than 1 in 10 people on the waiting list had waited longer than a year – equalling Victoria and nationally – and less than in NSW.

Notably, Tasmania had the best performance of all states and territories for paediatric surgery in 2022-23 across all three waiting time metrics. Waiting times were 29.5 days at the 50th percentile, compared to 57 days nationally.

Tasmanian hospitals recorded shorter-than-average waiting times for some surgeries compared to similar hospitals nationwide:

- The Royal Hobart Hospital had a median wait time 77 days shorter than peer hospitals for a total hip replacement and 187 days shorter for total knee replacement than peer hospitals.
- Launceston General Hospital patients waited 53 days less on average for cataract extraction than at its peers, and 117 days less for tonsillectomy.

- Patients at the North West Regional Hospital waited 16 days less for carpal tunnel surgery, and those at the Mersey Community Hospital waited 94 days less for cataract surgery, compared to the peer average.

Minister for Health Guy Barnett said the nation-leading figures are further evidence that the Rockliff Liberal Government's \$196.4 million Statewide Elective Surgery Four-Year Plan 2021-2025 is continuing to deliver positive results for Tasmanians.

"Our clinician-led elective surgery plan continues to work, with record levels of surgery delivered in the last 12 months, and the length of wait time falling significantly", Minister Barnett said.

"The wait list has now remained below 8000 patients since June 2023.

"I would like to thank our incredible doctors, nurses and health professionals for their hard work in delivering this plan and helping more Tasmanians get the care they need.

"We will continue to take action in the third year of our elective surgery plan, to ensure more Tasmanians receive their surgery sooner."