

Guy Barnett MP

Minister for Health
Minister for Energy and Renewables
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
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Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

Guy Barnett, Minister for Health

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Record number of surgeries driving down Tasmania's elective surgery waiting lists

A record number of surgeries have been performed in July and the elective surgery waitlist has dropped by 13 per cent, helping Tasmanians get the right health care when they need it.

The Tasmanian Health Service performed 1697 elective surgeries, 115 more than July 2022. This is on top of 21,364 surgeries in 2022-23, a record.

This was in addition to 1935 emergency and other surgeries and procedures, the highest number recorded since this measure was introduced.

Minister for Health, Guy Barnett said the Rockliff Liberal Government was delivering on its long-term health plan by doing what matters for all Tasmanians.

"These outstanding results are the being driven by continual investment through the \$196.4 million Statewide Elective Surgery Plan, which is delivering more surgeries across our state," Minister Barnett said.

"I would like to thank and acknowledge the hard work of our amazing health workforce, who support the health and wellbeing of our community."

Tasmania's elective surgery waitlist has reduced 13 per cent in the past 12 months, with 66 per cent of elective surgery patients seen in the clinically recommended time frame and the median waiting time for elective surgery dropping nine days since July 2022.

"The latest Health Dashboard also highlights improvements in breast cancer screening, dental appointments and a 28 per cent decrease in the waiting list for urgent surgery at Launceston General Hospital from July 2022 to July 2023," Minister Barnett said.

"In July, 3025 women were screened for breast cancer, 214 more than June, importantly, 95 per cent are assessed within 28 days of detecting an abnormality, well above the target of 90 per cent.

"Our Government's \$6.5 million commitment to provide an additional 23 350 dental

appointments has been well and truly beaten, with 24,770 additional appointments since the beginning of the program in April 2021.”

An ongoing challenge for our hospitals is the delays in discharging aged-care patients to Federally managed aged-care facilities, with 51 patients across the State waiting for aged care beds or National Disability Insurance Scheme assessment/approval in July 2023 and a further 22 patients waiting for NDIS supports.

“We know this has an impact on patient flow and we continue raise this issue with the Australian Government,” Minister Barnett said.

Patients are also reminded to cancel or reschedule appointments if they are unable to attend, with the dashboard highlighting 3520 occasions where a patient did not attend their outpatient appointment in July 2023.

This will help reduce the waiting list and ensure more Tasmanians can get healthcare sooner.

There were 14,993 Emergency Department presentations in July 2023, up 1490 compared to July last year.

Recent figures show almost 40 per cent, which is about 6000 people in July, of all presentations to Emergency Departments in Tasmania could be treated without presenting to emergency.

Minister Barnett reminded Tasmanians to only attend the emergency department if they need emergency care.

Alternative healthcare options are available across the State, including:

- Attending one of our recently opened Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (UCCs), which provide treatment for those with a an urgent, but not life-threatening, need for care. UCCs are now open at Launceston Medical Centre, 247 Wellington St, Launceston – from 2pm-8pm, seven days a week, and at Your Hobart Doctor, 71 Bathurst St, Hobart – from 4pm-10pm, seven days a week.
- Call Healthdirect on [1800 022 222](tel:1800022222) to get expert health advice from a Registered Nurse 24/7. They can provide guidance on whether to manage your condition at home, speak with your GP or visit an emergency department.
- Contact COVID@homeplus on [1800 973 363](tel:1800973363) if you have COVID-19 or other respiratory illnesses such as Influenza (flu) or flu-like illness.
- After hours GP services or speak with your pharmacy for advice and treatment on common ailments and illnesses, including coughs, colds, skin conditions, allergies and headaches. They can also provide advice on medicines and general healthcare.

For more information on the non-emergency health care options available in Tasmania, visit: www.health.tas.gov.au/rightcare